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# THESIS

JAPANESE AGGRESSION IN ASIA (1895-1930)  
JAPAN'S DREAM OF "HAKKO ICHUO" (EIGHT  
CORNERS OF THE WORLD UNDER JAPANESE  
RULE) BY

JOHN YUNG RHEE  
DECEMBER 1980

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JAPANESE AGGRESSION IN ASIA  
(1895-1930)  
Japan's Dream of "Hakko Ichuo"  
(Eight Corners of the World under Japanese Rule)

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

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# ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes Japanese aggression in Asia, 1895-1930, titled "Hakko Ichuo".<sup>1</sup> This aggression began in 1895, when the Sino-Japanese War started after Japan attempted to extend it's hegemony over the Korean Peninsula. Chapters II and III examine the emergence of the military nation-state in Japan. Chapters IV and V discuss the Russo-Japanese War, Japan's industrial policy, and Japan in Manchuria. Chapters VI and VII examine the Japanese policy of aggression, based on biased perceptions of its strategic interests.

1. "Eight Corners of the World under one roof"



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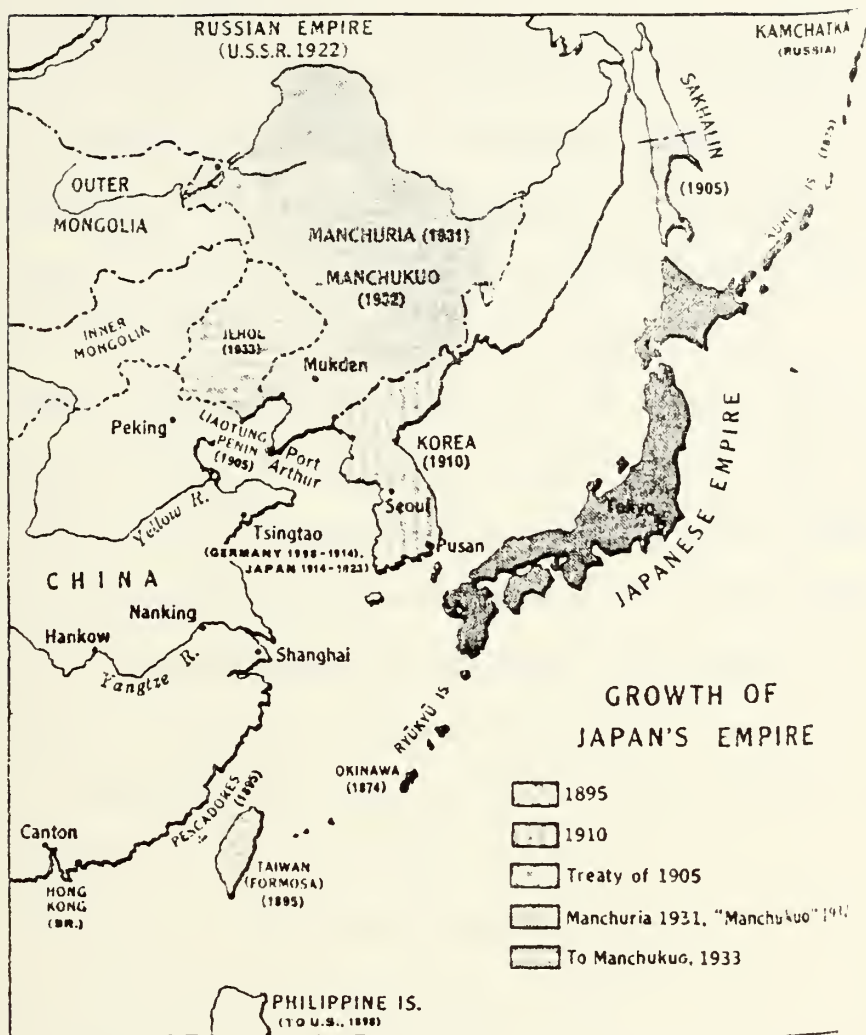
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*East Asia: The Modern Transformation*



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## I. Introduction

When Commodore Perry peremptorily awakened Japan from its medieval slumber, he taught Japan that a remote island nation was a part of the world community and that, if it were to survive, it must embrace the world's technology and ~~SOCIO~~-political institutions.

Japan eventually adapted a more modern system of government and administration, finance and arms; railroads were built, telegraph and cable systems were installed, and diplomatic relations were opened with foreign countries. Japan became a probationary member of the community of nations. Japan learned not only the world's forms of speech, the power of it's naval armadas and it's modern armies, and the power of steam; it also learned power politics. Japan saw that success, even survival, in the nineteenth-century meant empire, and forthwith set about attaining one. By the 1890's it was equipped with the paraphernalia of a modern state. Prussia was it's model, and soon Japan had a Prussian-trained army and a Prussian-inspired constitution and administration.<sup>1</sup>

In 1894, quarrels with Japan's great continental neighbor, China, led to War; and in a short and easy war the modernized Japanese forces routed those of the decayed,



corrupt and torpid Ch'ing bureaucracy, and Japan emerged as the major power in Asia. But in the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War, Japan benefited by an advanced course of instruction in power politics. The war originated in controversy over control of Korea.

From prehistoric times the Japanese believed the Korean Peninsula to be "a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan" and, therefore, to be kept at any cost from falling into unfriendly hands. For centuries the international status of the Peninsula had been ambiguous and, in the nineteenth-century, China still maintained pretensions to sovereignty over it.

In 1876 Japan, employing a faithful replica of Perry's tactics, had "opened" Korea, and obtained for itself recognition of a special sphere of interest there.<sup>2</sup>

China would not acknowledge that Korea was no longer in any realistic sense its tributary, and the immediate casus belli in 1894 was the Chinese effort to reassert and strengthen shadowy dominion over it.

The Treaty of Shimonoski, which ended the war,



awarded Japan indemnity, recognized the independence of Korea, ceded not only Formosa and the adjacent Pescadores but also the Liaotung Peninsula (at the southern tip of the Chinese province of Manchuria) to the victor as spoils.<sup>3</sup>

The map of northeast Asia shows the Liaotung Peninsula as a barrier across Chinese access routes to Korea. It also provides strategic dominance of northern China. But there were uninvited guests at the peace conference of 1895. Europeans did not welcome the participation of a newcomer in the "cutting of the Chinese melon", which had yielded many succulent morsels during the second half of the nineteenth-century. Even before the meeting of the plenipotentiaries at Shimonoseki, the Japanese government had become aware of an unfriendly tripartite intervention in the offing which would attempt to influence the peace terms. Hard on the signing of the treaty on 23 April 1895, the Ministers of Russia, France and Germany called at the Foreign Office in Tokyo and delivered notes stating that the possession by Japan of the Liaotung Peninsula "would render illusory the independence of Korea"; would be "a perpetual obstacle to the peace





of the Far East"; and "advising" that it be retroceded to China. Faced with the overwhelming force, Japan could only bow to this "advice", and relinquish the coveted foothold in Manchuria in return for an added indemnity. It had followed the most approved pattern of imperialism of the day, but had come on the scene too late; the empires were already preempted.<sup>4</sup>

Japan knew that the Tripartite Intervention had been conceived and managed by Russia. An active Russian imperialism in northeast Asia would bring Japan into conflict, sooner or later, which the Tsarist Empire unless Japan were to waive all claim to a share in the exploitation of the continent to which geographical propinquity and the international mores of the day appeared to entitle it. The conflict was not long delayed. The Sino-Japanese War demonstrated how much more debilitated China was than the European Powers had comprehended, and its prompt sequel was an accelerated "scramble" by them for concessions and further leases in China. The "breakup of China" was freely spoken of, and plans for the actual, formal partitioning were drawn in the chancelleries of Europe.<sup>5</sup>



In the forefront of the scramble was Imperial Russia. First, lending China the gold to pay the Japanese indemnity, Russia procured in 1898 a twenty-five year lease on the southern part of the Liaotung Peninsula, the same peninsula in which, a few short years earlier, Japan's control had been viewed with such pious apprehension. With this leasehold went the right to extend the Trans-Siberian Railway across northern Manchuria to Vladivostok, to connect it with the Liaotung territory by a new line, and to police and administer the railway zones.<sup>6</sup>

The Boxer rebellion in 1900 brought about joint foreign intervention in North China to rescue the missions and nationals and protect the interests of the treaty powers from the Xenophobic Boxers. Under the guise of protecting its interest, Russia overran the whole of Manchuria, established itself as de facto sovereign, and gave every indication of intending to remain. Tsarist penetration of Korea had also been vigorous and determined since 1895, and by the turn of the century it was an open secret that the ruler of all the Russias was dreaming of a new Oriental



empire which would join his Siberian possessions.<sup>7</sup>

Japan observed with dismay the unfolding of these events. Russia, established and ascendent in Manchuria, was an obstacle to Japan's legitimate continental aspirations; but a Russia grasping the Korean "dagger" was a deadly menace to the very existence of Japan as an independent nation. As Russia developed its Far Eastern rail net, as its military and naval fortifications in Manchuria proliferated, and as its political encroachments in China and Korea became ever more widespread, more open and insolent, Japan watched and prudently armed.<sup>8</sup>

During those years Japan endeavored unremittingly to reach a modus vivendi affecting recognition of respective spheres of interest for Japan in Korea and for Russia in Manchuria but to no avail.

In 1903, Japan began formal negotiations to resolve the issues. Half a year of parleying was fruitless and, at last, frustrated by Russian evasion and obstinacy, the Japanese government on 6 February 1904 broke off negotiations and severed diplomatic relations with St. Petersburg. Japan reserved the



right "to take such independent action as they may deem best to consolidate and defend their menaced position".<sup>9</sup>

The devastating Japanese torpedo attack on the Russian Pacific Squadron in the Port Arthur roadstead began the Russo-Japanese War. Japan had acted without warning this time, to obviate any contretemps which might again deprive it of the fruits of a victory fairly won. In 1902 Japan had executed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, by which England was induced to back the historic policy of "splendid isolation" for the mutual defense of their interests in China and Korea, respectively. The alliance provided that if either signatory should be attacked the other would come to its aid. Japan was thus assured of being able to deal with Russia without a repetition of the intervention of 1895. If the Sino-Japanese War had been won due to China's weakness, the Russo-Japanese was another story. Here Japan engaged Russia on the Asian littoral, five thousand miles across Siberia from Moscow, and demolished the motley Russian Squadron under Admiral Rodjesvenski at Tsushima on 27 May.

In the eighteen months following the attack on





Port Arthur, Japanese arms were victorious. In battle after battle Tsarist forces were driven from southern Manchuria and from the seas. The war was a gradual, inexorable crushing of Russian power in the Far East: The forcing of the Yalu and the march down the Liaotung Peninsula; the fall on New Year's Day 1905 of Port Arthur "the most impregnable fortress in the world"; the battle of Mukden in March, with a hundred thousand Russian casualties; and culminating in the sea battle on 27-28 May in which the ragtag Russian Fleet was annihilated. This war was costly to both belligerents and they were content to accept President Theodore Roosevelt's invitation to meet at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in September 1905, to make peace.<sup>10</sup> By the Treaty of Portsmouth Japan obtained a quitclaim to southern Liaotung (now known as Kwantung) and to the Russian railroads and other interests in southern Manchuria; recognition of a virtual protectorate over Korea, and cession of the southern half of the island of Sakhalin, across La Perouse Strait from Japan. For the ensuing forty years, until its defeat in the Pacific War, Japan's history was scribed by the vicissitudes of its continental



enterprise.<sup>11</sup>

As a result of the Russo-Japanese War, Japan sprang, a scant half century after awakening from feudalism, to rank as a world power. As one of the Five Powers, Japan helped redesign the world at Versailles and took its seat as a permanent member of the Council of the League of Nations.

As a world power, however, Japan came into conflict with the Western nations who possessed, or aspired to, special interests in Asia. Following the Russo-Japanese War, those powers had begun to feel suspicion, not unmixed with envy, of burgeoning Japanese ascendancy in Manchuria and China. Although Britain renewed and extended the alliance, it grew perceptibly cool to Japan's foreign policy and receptive to efforts, chiefly American, to restrain Japan.

In the United States, President Roosevelt viewed the Japanese challenge to the Russian goliath with his characteristic sympathy for the underdog. Before leaving office, however, he judged it politic to make a display of American naval might in the Pacific and sent the "Great White Fleet" of sixteen



battleships around the world, and visited Japan.<sup>12</sup>

When World War I broke out soon after, the Allies welcomed a companion in arms whose minimal role subdued Germany's base at Ts'ingtao on the Shantung Peninsula and whose navy drove commerce raiders from the western Pacific, occupied the German Carolinas, Marianas and Marshalls, and convoyed ANZAC troops safely to Europe. They were less happy to see Japan profit by their preoccupation with the war in Europe to consolidate for itself a position as ~~sav~~ereign of China. Had China yielded to the Japanese so-called Twenty One Demands of 1915, it would have become a virtual economic and political protectorate of Japans'. The Allies were also willing for Japan to provide the bulk of the troops, and the leadership, for the Joint Expeditionary Force to Siberia, in 1918.<sup>13</sup>

Their complaisance diminished, however, after their withdrawal in 1920, when they saw their Oriental ally remaining in occupation of much of the Siberian littoral until 1922. Japan also occupied Sakhalin until 1925 in reprisal for the Bolshevik massacre of Japanese soldiers and civilians at Niko-



laievsk. By the Peace Conference of 1919, as one of the vistors, Japan received a mandate over the ex-German islands in the Pacific north of the equator, and was awarded German's concessions and properties in Shantung.<sup>14</sup>

The cluster of treaties entered into at the Washington Conference of 1921-22 was to influence the course of Far Eastern history up to and after the Second World War. The conference had two objectives: to rectify the new balance of power which had advanced Japan to a position of dominance in East Asia, and to end the naval building race by imposing some system of limitation on the world's chief navies. The latter goal was achieved by the Treaty Concerning the Limitation of Naval Armament, setting the capital ship ratio of the American, British and Japanese navies at 5:5:3, prescribing a limit on the size of vessels to be built, declaring a ten year "holiday" on new construction, and freezing the status quo of fortifications and naval bases in the Pacific.<sup>15</sup>

Rectifying the balance of power in Asia meant restraining Japan. To this end, the Anglo-Japanese





Alliance had to be terminated. The alliance was replaced by the Four Power Treaty in which the United States, Great Britain, France and Japan pledged mutual respect of the rights and territories in the Pacific area. Next, the traditional American policy of the "Open Door" in China was to be formalized by treaty. For the purpose the Nine Power Treaty was concluded, guaranteeing the sovereignty, independence and integrity of China and binding the signatories to refrain from taking advantage of conditions in China in order to seek special rights or privileges.<sup>16</sup>

This treaty was signed by eight foreign powers with interest in China: The United States, Great Britain, France, Japan, Italy, Holland, Portugal and Belgium and by China itself.<sup>17</sup>

Japan also agreed by separate treaty to restore to China sovereignty over the Shantung Peninsula, which had been assigned to Japan at Versailles.

One Asiatic power had been conspicuously absent from the Washington Conference. Russia since 1917 was the land of Bolshevism and terror, an international outlaw, and was not invited to respectable gatherings. A Japan with interests in Asia could never be indiffer-



ent to Russia, however, and it became necessary that Japan regularize relations. In 1921 the question was what to do about the Allied involvement in Siberia, which was obviously productive only of increasing tax bills and the mounting suspicions of Japan's late allies. One school of thought believed that, rather than entering into relations with the Soviet regime, Japan should; support and use the Cossack Ataman Semenov, or some of the other adventurers struggling for supremacy in Siberia; continue or extend its occupation of Russian territories, and permanently exploit them. Another school advocated the opposing view, that the Soviet state was a fact and would prove stable and recognition should be extended to it. This view also held that military occupation of territories was unjustifiable, that Japanese forces should be withdrawn, and outstanding disputes settled by negotiation with the successors to the Russian Empire. The latter course was adopted by the government.<sup>18</sup>

As the first step in implementing this policy, the Maritime Province of Siberia was evacuated in October 1922, in conformity with Japan's promise given at the Washington Conference. The resumption



of relations was then attempted, but meetings with representatives of the Moscow government, or the ephemeral Far Eastern Republic, proved abortive. Only after the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic was established did protracted negotiations result in the "Basic Convention" of January 1925. Relations were resumed on the basis of Soviet reaffirmation of the Treaty of Portsmouth, the granting of coal and petroleum concessions in northern Sakhalin, and an expression of regret for the Nikolaievsk massacre. For a few years following the Washington Conference, Japanese foreign policy under the dominating personality of Baron Shidehara expressed faithfully the Washington treaties spirit of peaceful intercourse, equal opportunity and the Open Door. Domestically, since 1919, party cabinets had held sway, and the nation seemed on the way to establishing for the first time a tradition of responsible parliamentary democracy.<sup>19</sup>

This misnamed "period of normal government" did not long continue. During, and for a time after, the World War, Japan had experienced a great economic boom. The war had cost it little, while offering



lucrative opportunities for uncontested access to the markets of Asia which the European nations were, for the time being, too bust to supply. Industrialization of the nation and a metamorphosis of its economy resulted in unprecedented prosperity. With the return of peace, and the re-entry of the Western nations into competition, the bubble burst, and to the predictable apres-guerre restlessness was added the economic stringency of an industrial plant with no outlet for its product. This gave the old economic and political urges for expansion the fresh support of militarists, who had been unusually quiet since the Siberian fiasco. They opposed the "weak-kneed Shidehara diplomacy" and the threat to the national security involved with schemes of disarmament and advocated a "positive policy" toward China. Positive policy or negative, both had the same objective: the active promotion of the China trade, to develop a market in China for Japanese goods. The disagreement was in the means to be employed. Shidehara insisted on allaying Chinese ill will and cultivating a true friendship and a peaceful coexistence founded on a sincere respect for Chinese sovereignty and territorial





integrity. The "positivists" advocated the use of force to advance Japan's interests in China, and especially in Manchuria.<sup>20</sup>

The positive policy won. At this time the Nationalist Chinese forces of the Kuomintang were battling their way up from the south under the captaincy of Chiang Kai-shek and were recording much progress in their revolutionary venture of unifying China under one government. This unification threatened to extend to Manchuria where Marshall Chang Tso-lin, war lord of Manchuria, master of Peking and Japanese coadjutor, gave evidence of going over to the Kuomintang. It was apparent that this would not be compatible with the historical goal of Japanese hegemony there. The cry for a positive policy to counter the threat of exclusion from Manchuria brought about installation in Japan of a cabinet in which one of its advocates, General Baron Tanaka, was Premier and Foreign Minister.<sup>21</sup>

Direct Japanese military intervention in China began. Expeditions were dispatched to Shantung in 1927 and again in 1928, to "protect the lives and



property of Japanese nationals" and to warn off the Nationalists. Chang Tso-lin was murdered in 1928 by the bombing of his private train.<sup>22</sup>

Boycotts of Japanese goods became epidemic throughout China and pro-Kuomintang movements took form in Manchuria itself. Most ominous of all, the Chinese began to build rail lines paralleling Japan's South Manchuria Railway, which had been taken from Russia in 1905 and had become "Japan's, lifeline in Manchuria". The Chinese government was patently scheming to eradicate Japanese influence from Manchuria. Japanese military ambition was restive in the face of the growing threat of China's resumption of dominion over its territory. While events were building up to a test in Manchuria, international relations were ruffled by developments in other fields.

The United States Congress saw fit, in 1924, to embody in its new Immigration Act a prohibition on Japanese immigration into the United States. It was an action without relevance to the attainment of any American national policy. A "Gentlemen's Agreement" of 1907, scrupulously observed,



had halted Japanese emigration to the United States for near two decades.<sup>23</sup>

As with the earlier refusal of the Allied Powers at Versailles to incorporate into the peace treaty an affirmation of the principle of racial equality, this could be taken by the Japanese only as a gratuitous affront, and it was an unfortunate blow to good relations. Pressures arose, in the London Conference of 1930 to revise and expand the scope of the Washington Treaty. Japan demanded a 10:10:7 ratio, but finally agreed to continuance of the existing ratio to the end of 1936.

The eventual breakdown of the system of naval limitations began in 1930. Military adventure was delayed until 1931 and when it came, its agent was the Japanese Kwantung Army, in Manchuria. Originally a garrison for the Kwantung Leased Territory and the South Manchuria Railway Zone, this military establishment became a corps d'elite of the Army. It had developed a certain impatience with the civilian government which had failed to evince sufficient concern for Japan's prestige as a continental power. It was this institution which, on



18 September 1931, precipitated the Manchuria Incident.<sup>24</sup>

The Japanese claimed that a Chinese bomb was detonated on the tracks of the South Manchuria Railway near Mukden. Whether or not it ever happened, no one knows; but the Kwantung Army acted swiftly in "self-defense". It burst out from the Leased Territory and the Railway Zone to seize strategic points.

Mukden was placed under martial law and Chinese garrisons were disarmed. Upon receipt of the news, the government in Tokyo adopted a policy of non-aggravation on the incident, and so instructed the military authorities and the Commander in Chief of the Kwantung Army. But it was too late; the call of destiny which the Army was hearing drowned out the voice of government. Fighting broke out at points more and more distant from the locale of the original incident.

The Kwantung Army was swiftly reinforced and within a few months the Chinese garrisons had been driven from the whole of Manchuria, and Manchuria's chief cities were occupied by Japanese forces. China





appealed to the League of Nations, in the first test of that body's ability to enforce specific settlement of international disputes.<sup>25</sup>

The League acted, enough though in the end it declined to use force, by dispatching to Manchuria the famous Lytton Commission. The result of the commission's activities was a report unanimously rejecting the Japanese plea of self-defense and finding Japan guilty of aggression. When the League Assembly voted 42 to Japan's 1 to adopt the Lytton Commission's report, the chief Japanese representative, Mr. Matsuoka, led Japan's delegation from the floor, in February 1933.<sup>26</sup>

While the League had debated, an irresistible "independence movement" had brought about the separation of Manchuria from China and the establishment, on March 1, 1932, of the new state of Manchukuo, "the country of the Manchus".<sup>27</sup>

Manchukuo was promoted to an empire in 1934, presided over by the "Boy Emperor" whom China had dethroned in 1912, P'u Yi, now the Emperor K'ang Te. Since 1932, the Empire had expanded to include Inner Mongolia, China's Imperial Province par



excellence, commanding Peking.<sup>28</sup>

The United States had laid down the "Stimson Doctrine" and the League had put its imprimatur on it. The doctrine of "nonrecognition of the fruits of aggression", and Japan, isolated and without an adherent, was faced with ostracism from international society. Japan gave notice of its withdrawal from the League, on 27 March.<sup>29</sup>

In common with the other treaty powers, Japan had the right under the Boxer Protocol to station troops at certain points between Peking and the sea; a right which, unlike the other powers, it had exercised by maintaining a considerable army in the Peking-Tiensin area. To these Japanese North China forces now passed the initiative. The presence of such an army of occupation in an area traditionally the preserve of native warlords and their armies could not but result in collisions. Frequent incidents, of attacks on Japanese troops or residents, of destruction of Japanese property, of anti-Japanese boycotts, occurred or were alleged, and occasioned demands for reparation accompanied by ultimatums entailing the withdrawal of Chinese troops and the delegation of political authority



by the central government to local regimes.

As the sovereignty of the Chinese state was thus diluted by infiltration, its territory was taken in flank by the Kwantung Army which, developing a marked tendency to act without reference to the government at home, extended its activities from Manchukuo westward into Mongolia and even, on occasion, crossed the Great Wall to menace Peking. "Autonomus regimes" sprouted throughout the North China and Mongolia areas; dealing with these puppets, rather than with the central government of China, the Japanese forces extorted, in the name of "economic cooperation", further abdications of sovereignty.<sup>30</sup>

The Chinese reaction to these phenomena was a resurgence of nationalism which, from around 1935, enabled the National government to make steady progress toward internal unity, while confirming it in a growing determination to clear all Japanese from its soil and to resume control of the nation. That which was uniting China was, in large measure, the spirit of resistance to Japan.

A sense of impending doom was pervasive. In



Japan, in step with the developments in China, a strong tide of chauvinism had set in after the Manchuria Incident. Any who opposed aggrandizement and militarism were stigmatized as "corrupt politicians" or "self financial magnates", who must be silenced. Ready at hand as silencer was a tool of ancient tradition in Japanese politics, assassination, now put to systematic use by militarists, together with a heterogeneous rabble of ultranationalists and other fanatics. Already, in the years between 1918 and 1932, the period of "normal government", three premiers and assorted other public figures had met death by violence because their views were "unsatisfactory".<sup>31</sup>

In the atmosphere of glorification of militarism and force created by the successful Manchuria Incident, the Army's prestige had been so enhanced that it was able to dictate the composition of Cabinets.

Even one of its most famous officers, General Ugaki, was unable, in 1937, to carry out the Imperial mandate to form a cabinet when no general could be found willing to serve as War Minister under the General who, in the nineteen twenties, had consented to a reduction in the size of the standing army.<sup>32</sup>





In Western Europe, Hitler's star was ascending. Japan began to move toward rapprochement with authoritarian Germany, due to a sense of friendlessness and isolation of which both were conscious after withdrawal from the League.

The Army's traditional hostility to Russia and affinity for Germany, the growing sympathy for the totalitarian ideology, and admiration for the German dictator's victories, hastened the agreement; fascism became the national policy when Japan entered into the Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany in November 1936, and the Axis came into being.

The Anti-Comintern Pact was aimed ostensibly only at halting the spread of communist ideology, but it plainly implied military and political alliance against the Soviet state.<sup>33</sup>

By the close of 1936, the conjunction of unrest in China and the triumph of authoritarian principles in Japan gave clear warning that a major venture of aggrandizement was gestating. It was born, on 7 July 1937, at Lukouch'ao, the famous "Marco Polo Bridge", outside Peking, to be promptly christened the "China Affair". Through 1939 and 1940 Japanese gains were



negligible; it was a stalemate, which remained un-  
broken until the China Affair became one aspect of a  
larger war on 8 December 1941.<sup>34</sup>



## II. Background of War: Birth of a Military Nation-State

The Meiji Government returned political authority to the Tenno in 1867. When the feudal period ended, the warriors (Bushi) lost their special privileges as a class, indeed they disappeared as a separate and distinct part of the population. The Bushi numbered about 408,000 and they were given public bonds and the title of shizoku or warrior-class. Other privileges were cancelled. They became government officials, merchants or farmers. In 1872, the Government introduced a conscription system to replace the Bushi class.<sup>35</sup>

Men whose ideas were essentially those of the vanished warrior-class carried the largest share of the burden of building the new government in Japan. They constructed an authoritarian state that was ideally suited for purposes of war. The whole concept of war and the bearing of arms was changed with the fall of the Tokugawa shogunate and the collapse of the feudal order.

It was arranged in 1869 that the daimyo should return their estates and the lands to the Tenno and become governors of their former land as His Majesty's officials. In 1871, this system was abolished, new prefectures were created, and new governors appointed.<sup>36</sup>



Mass conscription changed a mark of social distinction and political power into a duty and an obligation to the state. The system of universal male conscription was instituted in 1872, and every able-bodied male knew that the state was going to demand that the women had to send their sons, fathers, brothers, and husbands off to fight and die for the country. Only by accident or ill fortune could one escape this debt to the state.

A large proportion of the civilian population contributed indirectly, as well as directly, to the maintenance of the army. Whether workers, contractors, businessmen, manufacturers or financiers, all had an interest one way or another in the army and navy.

In the early years of modern Japan the army had perhaps its best justification. The stress and strain caused by the destruction of the feudal order and the shift to a quasi-modern state inevitably brought in its train dislocations which might have proved serious had not the government controlled an army able to maintain relative peace and order within the country during those critical times. Japan also needed an army for protection from the threat outside its borders. For some





time after the opening of the country there was danger that foreign arms might reduce Japan to the same semi-colonial status that was rapidly being forced on China. These threats were enough to justify the building up of an extensive armed force.

By the 1880's, foreign intervention in Japanese affairs had virtually disappeared, and the new structure was secure against any active internal opposition.<sup>37</sup>



## A. Emperor Deemed Sacred

The Imperial Constitution was drafted by the Meiji Government in the name of the Tenno. The leading figure was Ito Hirobumi, who had gone to Europe in 1883 to study constitutional law. He devoted most of his studies to the German Constitution and was secretly engaged in drafting the Constitution after his return to Japan the following year. The Constitution was promulgated in February 1889.<sup>38</sup>

Since the structure of the state was considered eternal, the constitution contained no provisions for amendment by the legislative branches. The new instrument fully protected the ancient prerogatives of the throne and those who represented it. Article One declared, "The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal". Article Three proclaimed, "The Emperor is sacred and inviolable", while the succeeding article declared, "The Emperor is the head of the Empire, combining in himself the rights of sovereignty, and exercises them according to the provisions of the present constitution". Thus, the competence of the crown was



unlimited.

On the one hand, the emperor was above criticism; on the other, the legislative and executive powers culminated in him and nothing could be decided without his consent or that of his personal advisors.

"Article 11. The Emperor has the supreme command of the army and navy."

"Article 12. The Emperor determines the organization and peace standing of the army and navy."

As the Emperor commands the army and navy, his orders do not have to be countersigned by any minister of the state. Crown and government influence were further reinforced by a series of institutions such as the genro or elder system.

The Emperor is theoretically the supreme ruler over the empire, but he is regarded as irresponsible for affairs of the empire. The real responsibilities rest with the three almost entirely independent executive offices, the Cabinet, the Army General Staff, and the Naval General Staff.

In the case of a disagreement between the Cabinet and the Army General Staff, the home of militarists, on matters of armed forces or foreign affairs, the winner was usually the General Staff. To protest against a



decision made by the Cabinet, the minister of the army resigns from his post. It brings a Cabinet crisis, and usually resignation of the Cabinet as a body. A new premier must find a suitable ranking army officer as the minister of the army; but an army officer does not generally venture to secure the post without the backing of the General Staff. Therefore, no new Cabinet can be formed against the will of either Staff. When firm disagreements exist among the militarists themselves, they seldom hesitate to use violent means to settle their differences.

Army men play more important roles in the Japanese politics than navy men. The Army General Staff itself, or a group of officers who have power to control the Staff, acts freely on a military operation which could endanger international relations, without any kind of consent from, or of consultation with, the Cabinet. Most of the Japanese foreign policies of that time were not designed by civil statesmen or by diplomats, but by the militarists.





## B. Shinto Revived by Meiji

The emperor worship idea was actually derived from Shintoism. Shinto is not a Japanese term for the religion. It is the Chinese equivalent of what the Japanese call Kami no michi, meaning "the way of the gods," and had come into popular usage.<sup>39</sup>

The numerous Kami in the Shinto pantheon were nebulous in character. They assumed no visible form even where the enshrined spirit had formerly been an extraordinary human being. Worship consisted of a simple ceremony of obeisance performed before a natural object that was thought to contain a Kami, or before a symbolic representation of the object.<sup>40</sup>

After the Meiji Restoration Shinto became the chief instrument with which the government sought to win the loyalty of the people and to unify the country. The Meiji leaders tried to make an exclusive state cult of Shinto.

In 1884 State Shinto was officially designated Shrine Shinto and was elevated to suprasectarian status, which placed it above all other religious bodies but removed it from competition with them. Shrine Shinto



was assigned a number of shrines and an enlarged priesthood and acquired a refined body of doctrine and ceremonial practices. In the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890, the politico-religious doctrine of Shrine Shinto was formally defined for use in mass indoctrination. Japan was a divine country created by the gods and ruled by an unbroken line of emperors descended from the Sun Goddess. Confucian ethical concepts of filial piety and loyalty to the family, state, and emperor were stressed, and ceremonies based on emperor worship became the foundation of national morality. In the schools, the army, the navy, and various governmental organizations, obeisance to the emperor and shrine ritual were made compulsory, and all Japanese, even those who subscribed to other religions, were required to register with a Shinto shrine.

As the sovereign rights of the state were accorded the emperor, it was logical that the ministers should be responsible to the emperor rather than to the people. The oligarchy could hardly have secured its position more thoroughly than it did by monopolizing access to absolute authority.



## C. Shinto and Nationalism

State Shinto insisted that the reigning emperor and his ancestors were of divine origin. Throughout the cult, the superiority of the Japanese as a race, their divine mission in the world, and their supreme devotion to the emperor were stressed. Japan was pictured as an invincible nation. To reach the young and begin their indoctrination early, Shinto rituals were made a fundamental part of the training of every school child.<sup>41</sup>

By an imperial edict of 1890, Japanese youth were taught that the imperial throne was as ancient as the very origins of heaven and earth. "Ancient and impressive national beginnings, dim legends of a glorious decline from the gods, became registered in the national conscience through the purely political device of falsified historical writings."<sup>42</sup>

Thus the Meiji Restoration was developing an instrument of state capable of producing the blind loyalty and devotion Japan's leaders required. To the reformers, education meant not the development of young minds for participation in a fuller life, but rather the training of a technically competent citizenry to



help build a strong state. Education, therefore, was essentially designed as a tool for government training of obedient subjects who would serve well in the machinery of the modern state. Increasingly the schools became a medium for teaching the people what to think rather than how to think. Thus, Japan pioneered the concept of utilizing the educational system for political indoctrination. In classrooms and in army barracks, young Japanese men were taught to glorify Japan's military traditions. They came to believe that death on the battlefield for the sake of the emperor was the most glorious fate of man, and they also believed in the unique virtues of a vaguely defined national system and an even more vague Japanese spirit. Together, the government and army succeeded in just a few decades in creating in the average Japanese the fanatical nationalism already characteristic of the upper classes, and even more fanatical devotion to the emperor, cultivated by historians and the Shinto creed, and fostered by the oligarchy around the throne. Viscount Oura, Minister of Commerce on 1908, declared, "The majesty of our imperial house towers above everything else in the world,





and we take it for granted that it is as perdurable as heaven and earth. If it is contended that our country needs religious faith then, in my opinion, we must adopt the religion of imperialism, in other words, the worship of the emperor."<sup>43</sup>



#### D. Japan's "Divine Mission" and War Psychology

The title "Emperor" is a misnomer. The Japanese do not call him emperor, but Tenno, the Heavenly King. They do not class him with emperors and kings of nations. He is above them all, a superior being. His sanctity is proclaimed in all official statements, in the national history for every school. Even great Christian leaders educated in the West, such as the late Inazo Nitobe, declare the ruler of Japan is "the bodily representative of Heaven and Earth".

Japanese divinity does not stop with the Emperor and land. The people are also a part of it. The aborigines of Japan were all gods and goddesses, and from them descended the Yamato race, Seed of the Sun. All other mortals are inferior. From the divine descent of the Japanese people "proceeds their immeasurable superiority to the native of other countries in courage and intelligence".

Every Japanese is taught to believe he is more or less a god, because he belongs to this divine Yamato race. Young people grow up with the belief that (1) Japan's Emperor is the only divine ruler, (2) Japan is



the only divine land, (3) Japan's people are the only divine people and, therefore, Japan must be the light of the world. A soldier who dies on the battlefield, or a patriot who sacrifices his life for the Emperor, automatically becomes a full god and joins the great family of gods in the Lotus heaven. The so-called Imperial Geneology was invented about 700 A.D., when the Shogunate was abolished and the Emperor was restored to power. All believed in the divinity of their Emperor, their land, and their people. They claimed world domination under the rule of their Mikado. Since their Mikado was the only heavenly King, the logical conclusion was that he was the only rightful ruler of the universe, and that his army and navy were to save the world. There should be but one sun in all the heavens and but one ruler in all this mundane sphere. World peace, so much desired, would be obtained only through Japanese sovereignty. It was Japan's heaven-ordained mission to establish "a new order in Asia", and that was why "Japan is the only stabilizing force in the Far East". It was the part of caution that the Japanese modified their claims by confining them-



selves to Asia and the Far East. But they extended "the New Order in Asia" to "a new world order, a stabilizing power in the Far East" to a "stabilizing power on the entire earth".<sup>44</sup>

The late Yosuke Matsuoka, then chief of the South Manchurian Railways, stated in 1931: "It is my conviction that the mission of the Yamato race is to prevent the human race from becoming devilish, to **rescue** it from destruction and lead it to the world of light." The late Count Matsuoka declared in the House of Peers that the racial spirit of Japan alone could save the world from the chaos into which it had fallen.

We have already seen the religious crusade against foreign missionaries and Christian churches, to establish the Shintoistic idea of emperor worship as the supreme national religion.

Politically, the democratic idea of freedom and equality was diametrically opposed to the Japanese system of government. The ruling class, belonging to heaven, must be as high as the heavens above the mass of people. No individual liberty could be allowed to disrupt this order of nature. According to this principle of govern-





ment, freedom of the press and freedom of speech are as dangerous to the political organism of Japan as poison is to human lungs. To criticize openly or condemn the chief executive of the nation, as is done in America, is unheard of in Japan. The practice of strikes as part of the recognized exercise of individual rights is regarded as an evil in the social and economic life of the nation.

Out of this Shintoistic mysticism the Japanese have gradually developed a peculiar psychology of war combined with an extreme sense of patriotism. Having been confined in their island world ever since the creation, and their every attempt to secure a foothold beyond the sea during all the past centuries having been frustrated by the peoples of the mainland of Asia, their hereditary national ambition was naturally a military conquest overseas. Out of their wish they developed this war-making mentality which, in turn, produced the proud warrior class of the Samurai.<sup>45</sup>

The combinations of emotions with the elements of remotest antiquity found in the Shinto convictions explain the secret of the subsequent political success



and strong nationalistic temperament. Nationalism, like the spirit of Shinto, called into play not only the will, but the intellect, the imagination, and the emotions. The intellect constructs a speculative mythology or, perhaps, a theology of nationalism. The imagination fabricates an unseen world around the eternal past and everlasting future of one's nationality. Emotions arouse a joy and ecstasy in the contemplation of the national god who is all-good and all-protecting, a longing for his favors, a thankfulness for his benefits, and a feeling of awe and reverence at the immensity of his power and wisdom. Its chief rites are public rituals performed in the name and for the salvation of the whole society. Thus, it is easy to see why the ancient Shinto fostered the growth of this phenomenon and, in a sense, became almost wholly integrated into it as a concept.<sup>46</sup>

The opening of their country to intercourse with Western Powers brought into Japanese minds the ideas of nationalism and patriotism which were highly developed in the Western world. While adopting all the Western ideas of life, they accepted chauvinism unreservedly and gave to it the place formerly held by the idea of loyalty to their feudal lords which prevailed in the



days of the Shogunate.

Side by side with the Shintoistic idea of emperor worship grew the "cult of war". With national expansion as its objective, the practice of warrior worship became almost a religion. Born and raised in that atmosphere and educated and inculcated with the patriotic militarism, every Japanese had the same attitude toward the Emperor and the Empire - to die for them was the highest glory on earth.

Foreign Minister, Yosuke Matsuoka, stated in January 1941, in a radio address to Japanese communities abroad, mainly in the South Sea islands, that "...this is not my desire alone; it is the desire of all Japanese. The ideal of the founder of our empire 'all mankind under one roof' - should be made the ideal of all mankind...those ideals are interwoven into our alliance with Germany, which is the guiding spirit of our foreign policy".<sup>47</sup>

Militarism and nationalism in Japan were thus inseparable. A military nation was born, and Japan became a major menace to Asia.<sup>48</sup> Patriotic groups of one sort or another kept the war spirit alive. The controlled press kept up a steady barrage of propaganda. In



addition, all groups and individuals suspected of harboring anti-war sentiments, or even ideas that might contain the seeds of discontent with war, were ruthlessly suppressed.<sup>49</sup>





### III. The Sino-Japanese War and the Triple Intervention

The rivalry between Japan and China for the control of Korea was the central issue leading directly to the Sino-Japanese War. The issue was presumably settled by the Treaty of Shimonoseki of 1895 by which both countries recognized Korea's complete independence. But during the next decade, the same struggle for control over Korea persisted, with Russia replacing China as one of the challengers. This was the period in which the leading European countries carved out concessions and spheres of influence for themselves in China. This movement was an outcome of their drive to maintain a balance of power in Europe and led to Japan's involvement in an alliance with Great Britain against Russia.<sup>50</sup>

China and Korea were the only foreign countries which had been in contact with Japan from ancient times.<sup>51</sup> Korea had been exchanging state-letters with Japan throughout the Edo Period and sent missions to Japan to celebrate the succession of the Shogun.<sup>52</sup>

Diplomatic relations between the two countries, however, had been suspended since 1811. The Meiji Government sought to resume diplomatic relations with Korea.



The Korean king was young and his father, who held the actual power, was a conservative dictator who followed a policy of isolation. Korea had disputes with France and the United States in 1866 and in 1871 respectively. When Japan proposed a resumption of diplomatic relations, Korea declined.<sup>53</sup> Anti-Japanese feeling became strong in Korea and in 1873 it refused to supply food to a Japanese diplomatic mission in Pusan. The Japanese Government had to decide whether to withdraw all Japanese residents from Korea or to open diplomatic relations by force. The government chose the latter course. An expedition was about to be sent when the return of the famous Iwakura mission from Europe and America brought the project to an end.<sup>54</sup>

The Iwakura group, impressed by what it had seen in the Occident, counseled a policy of waiting. They recognized Japan's weaknesses as well as they did the strength of the West. They knew that Japan had to proceed cautiously. The nation was not yet strong enough to follow the policy of conquest and exploitation that the West was implementing in China.<sup>55</sup>

As they were opposed to a Korean expedition, the faction headed by Saigo Takamori, who favored the move,



resigned from the government. Among the group which resigned, Takamori and Eto Shimpei later died in the rebellion, and Goto Shohiro and Itagaki Taisuke, who had worked for the establishment of a parliament by election.<sup>56</sup> In 1874, as a sop to those who had been disappointed in their hope to invade Korea, an expedition was sent against Taiwan because of attacks against Japanese there. The expedition won its few skirmishes with the native population, but did not win Japan any territory or prestige. From this small beginning grew Japan's plans of conquest. The steady succession of wars, all profitable, converted most Japanese to the idea that war and militarism were not only necessary and inevitable, but also profitable.<sup>57</sup>

The Japanese mission was not received by Korea, nor was a second one sent by the Imperial Government in 1868. Later, in 1869 and 1871, the Koreans again refused to have diplomatic intercourse with Japan.<sup>58</sup> In 1871, the Japanese sent a mission to negotiate a treaty with China. The mission was successful and, on July 29, 1871, the treaty was signed at Peking by Muneki Date and Li Hung-chang.<sup>59</sup>

In 1875, a Japanese man-of-war engaged in a survey



off Kanghwa was bombarded by the Korean fortress and returned the fire. Under these circumstances, when Japan attempted to negotiate a treaty with Korea which would have abolished the latter's seclusion and put Japan's relations with that country on par with those of China, complications immediately developed. In 1872-1873, when its envoys received rebuffs from the arrogant Koreans, there was violent reaction in Japan. Japan then sought to clarify the situation.<sup>60</sup> In China the emperors of the Manchu Dynasty had rules since 1644. The zenith of their power had been reached in the eighteenth century but later the dynasty was content to stay on the throne and to rule in the traditional ways without seriously facing the challenge of modernization. For the better part of two decades China was in a state of turmoil from the Taiping rebellion, which was not suppressed until 1864. The Manchus managed to reassert their authority in the period of the 'Tung-chih restoration' (1862-74) and took steps towards consolidation and modernization. They put down the great Muslim rebellions of the southwest in the seventies and re-established their sovereignty in the outlying tributary states of Indo-China





Tibet and Korea.<sup>61</sup>

China maintained that it possessed sovereignty over the Korean kingdom. Not satisfied with the Korean answer, Japan attempted to force the issue by following a policy which Perry had used so successfully in Japan in 1853. In 1875 Japan sought a treaty with Korea through a show of naval force along the Korean coast and through diplomatic negotiations. The mission failed; the next year Japanese ships surveyed the Korean coast despite gunfire from shore batteries. The Koreans were warned that the survey was in preparation for a military force which would support the next Japanese diplomatic move.<sup>62</sup>

It was a bluff, but it worked. China, which had only recently agreed to concessions in the Ryukyus as a result of the Japanese military expedition against Formosa, was afraid of future Japanese moves. Hence Viceroy Li Hung-chang told the Koreans to receive the proposed Japanese diplomatic mission.<sup>63</sup>

As a result, a treaty of amity and commerce was concluded between Japan and Korea in 1876.<sup>64</sup> Article I of the treaty recognized that Korea was independent and had equal rights with Japan.<sup>65</sup> By this first modern



treaty, Korea opened two ports to Japan and granted partial extraterritorial rights to Japanese subjects. In return, Japan recognized Korea as an independent state enjoying the same sovereign rights as Japan.<sup>66</sup>

One of the objectives of the Japanese negotiators had been to obtain an agreement which clearly established Korea as a country independent of Chinese or any other foreign influence.<sup>67</sup>

The treaty deserves some further observations. Most authors concluded that by this treaty Korea ceased to be a dependent state of China and that it prepared the way for the opening of Korea.<sup>68</sup> Actually these conclusions require certain qualifications. As to Korea's renunciation of dependency on China, observers based their arguments on Article I, which stipulated "chosen being an independent state...". The treaty was written only in Chinese and Japanese. The English translation, cited in the above quotation, was not authentic. The term "independent" in both the original Chinese and Japanese texts is "tzu chu", which means autonomous or self-governing, and was exactly the political status of Korea before the treaty, as the



Chinese Yamen had time and again declared: "Korea, though a dependent state of China, is completely autonomous in her domestic politics and foreign relations."<sup>69</sup> The same article further provided that Korea enjoyed "the same sovereign rights as Japan". Thus, it was asserted that since Japan was completely independent, so was Korea.

A gradual modification of China's policy toward Korea may be perceived by tracing the change of tone in the Ch'ing documents during the period 1876-82. China's noncommittal and noninterfering Korea policy, demonstrated in the early Sino-Japanese negotiations over the Kanfwha incident in 1876, continued for a few more years. At about the same time, however, many Chinese officials became aware of the danger of foreign incursions on Korea, and they advocated the adoption of a new policy.<sup>70</sup>

Hitherto, China had believed that Korea's isolation was a protection from both Russia and Japan.<sup>71</sup> Even after the conclusion of the treaty between Japan and Korea in 1876, the Chinese Government did not alter this concept. To formulate a new Korea policy, the Chinese government would have had to modify its basic ideas regarding dependent states, in particular the



principle of conformity with traditional rules. It was an axiom in Chinese administration procedure to follow precedent, regardless of political reality. Whatever precedent had been established during past regions regarding Korea would continue to be observed. Therefore, even though circumstances had changed, the policy of the Ch'ing court could not adjust accordingly.<sup>7.2</sup>





## A. Internal Affairs

Korea's internal politics were complicated by its foreign affairs. In 1863, a 12-year-old child, Koh Chong King, succeeded to the throne under the regency of his father, who was called the Taiwunkun. The weak boy king, married to a girl of the powerful Min family, remained under his father's domination until his strong-willed queen gained control in 1873. This precipitated a long factional strife that weakened the country. The Yi faction led by Taiwunkun was pro-Chinese and opposed Western ideas, while the Min faction led by the queen favored adoption of westernization and friendship with Japan.<sup>73</sup>

In 1882, the Yi group aided by rioters unsuccessfully attacked both the queen and the Japanese legation. China and Japan each sent forces to Korea to settle the affair. Japan extracted an agreement which, in addition to providing for an indemnity and punishment of the guilty, gave further trade privileges to the Japanese. To assert their sovereignty, the Chinese imprisoned the Taiwunkun. Increasingly, the internal political affairs



of Korea were becoming interlinked with the rivalry between China and Japan for Korea.<sup>74</sup> Despite strong popular opposition in Japan to diplomatic negotiations, in March 1885, Ito Hirobumi went to China to work out a solution with Viceroy Li Hung-chang. The two leaders met in Tiensin and, after brief negotiations through the good offices of the British Minister to the Chinese Court, Harris Parkes, the treaty was signed on April 18, 1885.<sup>75</sup> In this treaty, China and Japan agreed to withdraw their military forces from Korea within four months, and to notify the other party in advance should one party find it necessary to send its troops back. This Tiensin Treaty drove out Chinese influence and provided reciprocal opportunities to China and Japan alike, relative to Korean problems. But though both countries withdrew their forces from Korea, China continued to intervene in Korean domestic affairs.<sup>76</sup>



## B. Sino-Japanese War

After the uprising of 1882, China increased its interest in Korea. Yuan Shih-kai was sent to Seoul as China's resident minister. China now asserted its special position and gained control over Korean trade, customs, and communications. The Min faction meanwhile had come to fear the Japanese and turned to China for support, with the result that the progressive element of the Min, with Japanese aid, seized the king in December 1884. Yuan Shih-kai attacked with his forces and drove out the Japanese and their conspirators. By the subsequent treaties, Korea accepted full responsibility for the affair and paid an indemnity. Despite the fact that the treaty of Tiensin essentially recognized China and Japan as equals, China continued in control.<sup>77</sup> In 1886, Li Hung-chang threatened to dethrone the Korean king when he sought aid from Russia against China. England, to forestall Russian aggression, occupied Port Hamilton in south Korea for two years.<sup>78</sup>

The Koreans were the immediate cause for the Sino-Japanese strife. In March 1894, there developed in Korea a great religious-political uprising, the so-called



"Dong Hak Nan".<sup>79</sup> An antiforeign organization known as the Tonghaka led an uprising that the Korean government could not suppress.<sup>80</sup>

The Korean government with its small standing army tried for months, without success, to suppress the uprising.<sup>81</sup> China was asked by the Korean government for military help to suppress the uprising; so a Chinese army was sent to Korea on June 7, 1874.<sup>82</sup> The reason for China's armed intervention to suppress the Tonghak movement was clear. Peking wanted a new government that would follow an absolute pro-Chinese policy rather than the Min who were tending to ignore China for Russia.<sup>83</sup> Their chance came with the government appeal for military help against the Tonghak. In the meantime, Japan, too had been waiting to recover the lost ground of the military revolt and the reformist abortion. Japan was not asked to, but sent troops on the basis of the Tiensin Treaty which, from Tokyo's viewpoint, justified intervention because China had intervened.<sup>84</sup>

China and Japan clashed sharply in Korea. At the core of the antagonism was the struggle for control of the Korean market. On the eve of the war, the two were nearly equal in developing their respective Korean markets





but the Japanese determination to monopolize the peninsular trade was far stronger than China's. It was the Japanese determination, then, that was the fundamental cause of the war.<sup>85</sup>

The Japanese raised the question of the sovereignty of Korea; this concept was not strongly impressed in the Koreans' minds because Korea had been quiet and alone for many centuries. At last, Japan declared war on China on August 1, 1894, under the pretense of desiring to free Korea from the yoke of China.<sup>86</sup>

The Korean Government was persuaded to sign an alliance treaty with Japan in order to drive the Chinese influence out of Korea; so an alliance treaty between Korea and Japan was concluded on August 26, 1894.<sup>87</sup>

The Chinese armed force was under the command of General Sha Chih-chao; it was delighted to oblige the government. The Japanese army, under the command of Otori Keisuke, justified its arrival on the basis of the Tiensin Treaty, to protect Japanese nationals in the country. The presence of these foreign troops badly undermined the position of the Tonghak rebels who were, for all practical purposes, now out of the picture. Once in the country, both foreign forces were hesitant



to withdraw. But Japan was the more ambitious party.<sup>88</sup>

The war is best described as one between Li Hung-chang, Viceroy of China, and Japan. Even Li's forces were weakened by Chinese corruption, while the Japanese had a small but well-equipped and efficient military force and wholehearted national support of the war.<sup>89</sup>

The Chinese expeditionary force in Korea was not only beaten and driven out of Korea, but the Chinese Northern Fleet was crushed in the Yellow Sea by a Japanese fleet. China was forced to ask Japan for peace.

China seemed to think that Japan lacked the strength to fight, as its government and parliament had been divided against each other ever since the promulgation of the Constitution.<sup>90</sup>

Neither Russia nor Britain expected Japan to win. The war began in July 1894, and ended in March 1895, with a victory for Japan, which occupied territories as far north as the Peninsula of Liaotung. On April 17, 1895, the Shimonoseki Treaty was concluded. Its terms were as follows:

- (1) China recognized the independence of Korea,
- (2) China ceded the Liaotung Peninsula, Formosa and the Pescadore Islands to Japan,



- (3) China was to pay 200 million taels (300 million Japanese yen) to Japan as compensation,
- (4) A Sino-Japanese treaty was to be concluded modeled after treaties between China and European countries.<sup>91</sup>

Several days after the signing of the treaty, Russia, France and Germany presented a note to the Japanese Government claiming that Japanese domination of the Liaotung Peninsula would endanger Peiping, the Chinese capital, and menace peace in the Far East. The fleets of the three countries arranged a demonstration near Japan.

Russia had long been seeking an ice-free port. It had opened a port at Vladivostok and now wished to retain Lushun, Port Arthur, which would be impossible if Japan kept the Liaotung Peninsula.<sup>92</sup> France was then allied with Russia, and Germany regarded it in its interests to keep Russia busy with an eastern policy. As a result of pressure brought to bear by these three countries, Japan was obliged to return the Peninsula to China and received in exchange the sum of 30 million taels (45 million yen).<sup>93</sup>

China found difficulty in paying the compensation and was assisted by Russia and France.

Although Japan lost the Liaotung Peninsula, the amount of the compensation paid was more than that of all



the private capital in Japan and was far more than the money Japan had spent in the war. With such a huge income, Japan was able to establish the gold standard and most of the compensation was used to strengthen its military power, in particular to build up the navy. New men-of-war were ordered, mostly from Britain. The Sino-Japanese War, therefore, resulted in the development of Japan's economy and an increase in its military power. Heavy industry was extended and Japanese commodities flooded the Korean and Chinese markets. Weaving and other industries expanded.

This war had a great effect on the power politics in the Far East. Japan had a foothold on the mainland of Asia; the Chinese Empire began to crumble; the Russians decided to take a firm aggressive policy in the Far East, and to prepare to check the Japanese advance.





#### IV. The Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905

The 1895 European intervention had given a strong stimulus to Japanese nationalism. The conviction that Japan's destiny depended on its own material and spiritual strength grew stronger in 1898 when Russia took the Liaotung territory it had been instrumental in forcing Japan to renounce. In 1904 public opinion in Japan supported war with Russia when it appeared that this was the only means of expelling Russia from Manchuria and of assuring Japan's position as the most powerful nation in northeastern Asia.<sup>94</sup>

In 1895 Japan was largely an unknown quantity. Despite its victory over China, it was still considered by the Western powers a backward, semifeudal, inferior country. Just prior to the outbreak of the war with Russia, Japan had consolidated its position. It was ally of Great Britain, had important and special interests in Korea, and had obtained British and Russian recognition of those interests. It was recognized as a world power, and was confident enough of its own strength and ability to defy Russian threats.<sup>95</sup>

After forcibly removing Chinese influence from Korea



in 1895, Japan faced a more serious antagonist, Russia. Control of Korea and Manchuria seemed essential to the successful exploitation of Russia's Asiatic empire. Russia had no Pacific warm-water port, and to complete the Trans-Siberian Railway on Russian soil would be costly and inconvenient. Manchuria was sparsely populated and rich in resources. Korea had a considerable population but a hopelessly corrupt government. Both seemed fair game to the Russians. <sup>96</sup>

Russia had endeavored to expand toward the south so that it could secure some non-frozen ports. It had made war many times with Turkey in order to reach the Mediterranean through the Balkan Peninsula but failed because of the intervention of some European powers. Meantime, Russia had also conquered many small states in Central Asia; but was checked at last by the British when it reached territory near the neighboring states of India. The Russian plan of reaching the Indian Ocean had to be abandoned. The other plan was to secure some good outlets through the Far East. <sup>97</sup>

It had been said that Japan never forgave Russia for forcing it to hand back to China part of the fruits of its victory in 1895. It was, however, not so much



a question of forgiving or not forgiving. Actually, Japan never for a moment gave up the idea that it needed the Liaotung Peninsula, nor slackened its determination ultimately to acquire it.<sup>98</sup> In 1895 Japan was in no position to defy the international trio which threatened it. There was nothing to do for the time being but to eat humble pie and prepare for the future. Meanwhile, it had been awarded a territory of vast strategic value, and a tremendous monetary indemnity which went a long way towards helping it prepare for the struggle ahead. Ten years in which to rest, consolidate its gains, build up its fighting forces; and, Japan was ready to try again. When that time came it was Russia, and Russia alone, which blocked the way to Asiatic expansion by the way of the Liaotung Peninsula.<sup>99</sup>

Russia drew China into a military alliance and gained a right-of-way for the Trans-Siberian Railway by the Li Hung-chang-Lobanov Agreement of 1896.<sup>100</sup>



## A. The Sino-Russian Treaty

In March, 1896, less than a year after the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, Li Hung-chang was appointed by the Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi to journey to St. Petersburg for the purpose of representing China at the coronation of Russia's new Czar. He duly appeared there in all the regalia of his office and, in June 1896, he negotiated with Russia a secret treaty of alliance specifically aimed at Japan.<sup>101</sup>

The Li-Lobanov Treaty with Russia was to last 25 years, and provided for (1) a Russo-Chinese military alliance against Japan, (2) extension of the Trans-Siberian Railroad across Manchuria to Vladivostok under the jurisdiction of the Russo-Chinese bank, (3) extensive mineral, commercial, and industrial concessions in and close to the railway right of way, (4) the railway to be a purely Russo-Chinese concern which would automatically become Chinese property at the end of 80 years, but could be purchased by China after 36 years, and (5) a grant to Russia of the right to use certain Chinese ports in the event of war.<sup>102</sup>

By this treaty Russia secured a predominant influence





in China, particularly in Manchuria and, during the following year, by a combination of shrewd diplomacy and an ever present threat of force, similar to that which Japan had used formerly, it acquired a position of paramount influence in Korea, the independence of which had been so recently declared.<sup>103</sup>

Though Japanese-Russian rivalries for Korea's control were intense, both sides were forced to make concessions for the next few years. For example, when General Yamagata was sent to Russia in 1896 to represent Japan at the coronation of the Russian Czar, he suggested that Korea might be divided into two spheres of interest with the thirty-eighth degree parallel as the dividing line. By this arrangement Russian encroachment could be kept within bounds and Japan would have time to build up southern Korea and to solidify its position.<sup>104</sup>

Russian Foreign Minister Lobanov rejected this suggestion but by the Lobanov-Yamagata Convention of 1896, both countries reached a general understanding which, in effect, placed them on an equal footing in Korea. While Russia was primarily interested in Manchuria and Japan considered Korea of special importance



for its security, each avoided antagonizing the other.<sup>105</sup>



## B. Russo-Japanese Tensions

Japan was not ready for war, not yet. Instead, it opened negotiations with Russia over the "Korean question". There were three meetings, once each year between 1896 and 1898. The upshot was that Russia agreed that neither would intervene in Korean domestic affairs and that Russia would not prevent Japanese commercial or industrial expansions in Korea. This, however, did not mean that Russian ambitions were lessened. Russia's field was wider but its imperialistic urges were no less. Already, it had acquired Lushun and Talien from China as its "reward" for making Japan restore Liaotung to the Chinese and Russia was busy turning these ports into bases open to the wide seas of the Western Pacific. In 1899, it furthered maritime schemes in Korea, on one hand, by obtaining rights to Ulsan and Changjin as whaling bases; on the other, to Masanpo and Mokpo as naval bases for an Orient fleet. In turn, Japan acquired rights to Masan, Kunsan and Songjin as open ports and bought Masanpo from the Russians. Russia released Masanpo from the Korean government.<sup>106</sup> Clearly, tension was mounting. So far, it was a two-power antagonism confined to Korea.



At the turn of the century the famous "Boxer Rebellion" in China brought all the big powers down upon that country. Russia took this opportunity to send its armies into Manchuria on the pretext of protecting the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Once there, it did not budge even when the "Boxer" trouble had been suppressed and there was no reason to be there. To the contrary, it increased both army and naval power and set up a Government-General. This caused concern to Great Britain which, as usual, opposed undue Russian expansion. Here was Japan's opportunity to strengthen its hand against Russia by enlisting the sponsorship, if not the partnership, of Britain against the common threat. England, for its part, preferred to have the big power vacuum in Korea filled by Japan which was penetrating up the northern Far East rather than Russia which was expanding southward and out into the Pacific. The result was the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902.<sup>107</sup>

The Boer War had shown the weaknesses of the British military forces and Great Britain wanted to check the expansion of Russia into China; if Russia took Manchuria, British interests in Hong Kong, the Malay Peninsula, Burma, and even India would be threatened.<sup>108</sup>





As the military forces of Great Britain were not adequate to defend Manchuria, the desirability of an alliance with Japan was apparent. The British had already checked the Czar of Russia in the Crimean War.

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance maintained peace and the status quo in the Far East. It agreed that the independence of Korea and China would be maintained and the opportunity for all nations to maintain a sphere of influence in these two countries would be kept open. Neither country was to take aggressive action against Korea or China, but ~~each~~ could protect ~~its~~ own interests if necessary. Furthermore, if either power were to become engaged in a war the nonwarring power was to maintain strict neutrality.<sup>109</sup>

Although the Alliance was necessary for British interests in the Far East, the importance of the Alliance to Japan was much greater. The Alliance maintained that Japan had particular interests in Korea and it insured that, in the event of war with another European power, Japan could rely on Britain's neutrality and aid.<sup>110</sup> This allowed Japan a free hand in the Far East to deal with Russia. The Alliance was of great importance to Japan. Japan was tremendously encouraged. Now she could deal



from a position of equality with other imperialistic powers.

Japanese aggressive action in Korea was not only to gain extra territory and monopolize Korean markets and raw materials but also to control its own domestic problems. Japan was having difficulty making the new constitution work. On June 2, 1894, the same day as the revolt in Korea, the Japanese Diet was dissolved for the second time in six months. There were those Japanese politicians who felt that an aggressive action leading to the unification of all factions was the only thing that would save the new constitution.<sup>111</sup>

After the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, the Japanese did not demobilize their troops as most nations did, but actually increased the size of their army and navy. Because of the triple intervention of France, Germany, and Russia, Japan knew that it would probably have a conflict with a European power and, therefore, it was necessary to bring armed forces up to the level of Western powers. Japan was able to finance this expansion with the 200 million taels indemnity it had received from the Chinese.<sup>112</sup>

At the end of the war, five new divisions were



created and the organization was changed so that the cavalry, artillery, and engineers were attached independently to the infantry divisions.<sup>113</sup>

Compulsory service in the army was increased to twelve years - three in the active army, and then nine years in the reserves. There were also one-year volunteers who were able to extend their liability while they were in school or some other occupation. Better rifles for the infantry and guns for all artillery batteries were secured. These were manufactured in Japan and were of the largest type available in 1902.

Table 1

Comparative Figures of Armed Forces in Japan <sup>114</sup>		
	Before Sino-Japanese War, 1894-1895	Before Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905
Generals	36	94
High Officers and Officers	4235	8480
Petty Officers	8970	11,865
Trained Men	65,241	132,348
Untrained Men	185,000	425,000
Divisions	7	13

Table 1 compares the forces of Japan before the Sino-Japanese War and just before the Russo-Japanese War. It shows the great increase of the Japanese army in the years following the war with China.



At the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War, the navy was not large, but well-equipped and manned by well-trained officers and men. The admirals directing the fleets were also of the highest quality and Admiral Togo's victory over the Russians in the Russo-Japanese War proved this. The Russian Baltic fleet was all but annihilated on May 27-28, 1905, in the Sea of Japan. The help and influence of the British Navy was also of significant value, for then Britannia still ruled the waves. The huge indemnity received from the Chinese played an important part by paying for the expansion of the Japanese navy.

By 1904, the Japanese navy was ready. They were now able to confront the Russians with six battleships of 84,652 tons; eight armored cruisers totaling 111,470 tons. This was a sizeable increase in capital ships since the Sino-Japanese War. It was a rule by 1900 that, if possible, every part of the ship, including the hull, the armor, the guns, and the equipment, had to come from Japan. Since 1903, only three ships had been built abroad. These were the Koshima, Katori and Kongo, which were built in England.<sup>115</sup>





Japanese Naval Forces: 1894-1904 <sup>116</sup>

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	Before Sino-Japanese War, 1894-1894	Before Russo- Japanese War, 1904-1905
Battleships	1	6
Armored Cruisers	4	8
Cruisers	7	20
Light Cruisers	9	9
Destroyers	0	19
Motor Torpedo Boats	24	85
Others	11	...

The forced opening of Japan by Commodore Perry in 1853 caused the Japanese people to lose face and began to instill a spirit of nationalism and revenge in Japanese minds. The Meiji Restoration which followed gave new impetus to nationalism in Japan. Although unity was not established until the Satsuma Rebellion was crushed in 1877, unity of purpose was strongly established by the Meiji Restoration. <sup>117</sup>

By successful wars against China and Russia (and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the most important event in foreign affairs), Japan had become recognized as a world power.

To maintain its status as a world power, and to



fulfill imperialistic ambitions, government owned monopolies in industry were started and a land tax levied to finance them. Later these industries were sold to the Zaibatsu, a group of powerful financial cliques. The Zaibatsu, notable Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, and Yasuda, formed great monopolies, encouraged and supported the modern military expansion in the Far East, and kept nurturing Japan's military power.<sup>118</sup>



## C. Causes of the War

The Russo-Japanese War was caused by a clash of interests through the Russian invasion of Manchuria and Korea and Japanese expansion in its struggle for existence. The war can be traced to Russian Far-Eastern policy subsequent to the Sino-Japanese War.<sup>119</sup>

The Russians were indeed concerned with Manchuria. They were seeking an opportunity to further their interests, and the Boxer uprising provided it. The Boxers had begun marauding in Manchuria too, and parts of the railway were being torn up. The Russians found their pretext. Count Wittt, the Russian Minister of Finance, who figured so prominently in Russian expansion in the Far East, though an advocate of economic penetration as a stage to absorption, writes in his memoirs that as soon as the Boxer raids had become serious, General Kuropatkin, the Minister of War, had told him "this will give us our excuse for seizing Manchuria".<sup>120</sup>

Early in July 1900, Russian troops drove into north Manchuria, ostensibly to protect the railway, and soon city after city fell to them. Thus the Russians were participating in the Allied expedition to rescue the



legations in Peking and at the same time conducting their private war in Manchuria with no one to check on them. After the capture of Peking by Allied forces and the cessation of fighting in China, the Chinese requested the Russians to cease their advance in Manchuria and withdraw their troops. The Russians replied that the troops had to remain to preserve order which, incidentally, was no longer being disturbed except by them.<sup>121</sup>

Japan and Russia agreed on May 14, 1896, that each contracting party should recognize the other party's right to station necessary troops in Korea to protect its own interests. Japan and Russia made another agreement on April 25, 1898, that both contracting parties should respect the sovereignty and independence of Korea.<sup>122</sup>

During the years 1900-1902, the Japanese government acquired from the Korean government the franchise to build several important railroads; the entire shipping business was controlled by Japanese steamship companies. In 1902 Karl Waeber, the former Russian Minister to the court of the Emperor of Korea, Ko Chung, who had been a confidential friend of the Emperor since 1896, was sent to Korea by the Russian government to offer the Emperor Russia's highest medal. The Japanese government insisted





that by the Russian diplomat's influence on the Emperor, Masnpo, a southern port of Korea, was secretly leased to Russia as a naval base. Such rumors made the international relations between Japan and Russia worse day by day; only a miracle could have prevented them from clashing with armed forces.<sup>123</sup>

Russia carried out its first withdrawal of troops on October 8, 1902, but the second withdrawal scheduled on April 1, 1903 was not carried out. On April 18, 1903, Russia presented a new seven item demand to the Chinese government through its Minister, George de Placon.<sup>124</sup>

With this demand, Russia tried to close Manchuria and make China recognize it as Russian territory. This violated the Open Door policy and the territorial integrity of China. Japan, the United States, and Britain, as well as the Chinese government, protested to Russia, but Russia completely disregarded the protest and advanced to the northern frontier of Korea.<sup>125</sup>

Russia's action was thought to be associated with the increasing activity of Russian entrepreneurs over the Yalu timber concessions in north Korea and east Manchuria. This caused the Japanese especially grave anxiety. But in the so-called 'new course' adopted by the tsarist



government at various conferences between February and August 1903, it was agreed that the Yalu enterprises would be abandoned and that withdrawals from Manchuria would continue provided guarantees were obtained.<sup>126</sup>

The Japanese Minister in China asked his government to formulate its policy in response to the new situation. On 21 April, four of Japan's leaders discussed this subject at Yamagata's country house at Kyoto. The prime minister presented a draft memorandum, recommending a solution based on Man-Kan Kokan, and proposed in discussions with Witte and Lamsdorf in 1901, to promote it again. It also met with support from Yamagata and Komura.<sup>127</sup>

The steps to be taken were worked out by the cabinet and gave rise to some dissension. Ito and his fellow genro, Inoue, wanted a less forceful approach to Russia than the cabinet. An imperial conference was called on 23 June at which Ito, Yamagata, Oyama, Matsukata and Inoue represented the genro. The following terms were approved as the basis for Japan's approach to Russia:

1. To preserve the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea and the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry there;



2. Japan and Russia to recognize the rights which they possess at present in Korea and Manchuria respectively and the measures which have to be taken for their protection;
3. Japan and Russia to recognize mutually their right of sending forces when they need to preserve their above-mentioned interests or to repel uprisings in these territories. Troops to be withdrawn immediately after the object of sending them had been achieved. Police needed for railways and the telegraphs are not covered by this;
4. Japan possesses the special right to advise and assist Korea to carry out internal reforms.<sup>128</sup>

While paying lip service to the independence of China and Korea, this statement was only a refined version of Man-Kan KoKan. The conference, however, agreed that, when Russia had tightened its grip on Manchuria, Japan should take the opportunity to improve its standing in Korea.

In mid-1903, Japan offered to recognize Russia's sphere of influence over Manchuria if Russia accepted Japan's superiority in Korea. Russia replied by offering Japan only commercial and industrial supremacy in south Korea, while north Korea would be neutralized. Although Japan rejected this reply, Russian war preparations directed by Admiral Alexieff, Russia's new "Viceroy of the Far East," induced the Japanese to make new proposals offering (1) freedom of navigation in the Korean Straits, (2) a neutral zone along the Korean-Manchurian border, (3) railway connection between



Korean and Manchuria lines, and (4) recognition of Russian supremacy in Manchuria in return for Russian recognition of Japan's superior position in Korea. This and subsequent proposals were rejected by the Russians, who delayed negotiations until Japanese patience was exhausted.<sup>129</sup>

On February 6, as soon as it had broken diplomatic relations, Japan joined action with Russia. On February 10, the Imperial Declaration of War with Russia was proclaimed. Russia declared War on Japan on the same day.<sup>130</sup>

The war proceeded favorably for Japan. On May 1, Japanese forces crossed the Yalu river, won the battles of Liao-yang and Sha-ho, and captured the fortress of Port Arthur on January 2, 1905. The Japanese force then advanced north and in army strength encountered the Russian forces at Mukden. At this decisive battle, after inflicting over 10,000 casualties on the Russians, Japan won final victory on March 10. At sea, too, on May 27 and 28 the Japanese combined squadrons destroyed at Tsushima the Russian Baltic fleet which had started east from Kronstadt on September 11, 1904 and reached Japan in May the following year. The issue of the war was virtually decided in favor of Japan.<sup>131</sup>





## D. Stakes of War

Although the Russo-Japanese War was a limited conflict in terms of objectives and geography, the consequences of defeat had far different implications for each nation. For Russia, defeat would mean only a halt to its expansion in the Far East. For Japan, a defeat would lead to national disaster.<sup>132</sup>

A victorious Russia would have meant continued hegemony over Manchuria, occupation of Korea, control of the seas around Japan, and a powerful voice in the affairs of a weak China. Deprived of its markets on the mainland and with a hostile power occupying the Korean dagger pointed at its throat and in control of the intervening waters, Japan would have been in a perilous position. The principal war aims of Japan, therefore, to which its diplomacy had been directed for many years were to insure its predominance in Korea and to force Russia to vacate Manchuria which it had occupied since the Boxer Rebellion of 1900.<sup>133</sup>

In deciding to resort to war to achieve the political objectives, which it had been unable to attain through diplomatic means, Japan's military leaders faced a formidable task. Possessing a huge army, an ostensibly powerful navy, and a strong economic and financial base,



Russia loomed as a great power feared by every nation in Europe. Japan, on the other hand, although it had made great strides toward developing into an industrialized nation, was only 30 years out of feudalism, and its army and navy had never been tested in armed conflict with a Western Power.<sup>134</sup>

Japan's war aims were to insure its continued predominance in Korea and to force the Russians from Manchuria. The ultimate objective of Japan's military strategy was the destruction of Russia's army in Manchuria and its will to continue to fight far from its base of power. Had the Japanese Army been able to administer a crushing defeat to the Russian Army, it is reasonable to conclude that it could then have seized all of Manchuria and the Russian Maritime Provinces. The remnants of the Russian Army in Manchuria, plus the frontier and railway guards, would have provided little opposition to such an advance.<sup>135</sup>

By 1904 Japan was prepared for war with a modern fleet and a large well trained and well equipped army. Japan also had the advantage of fighting close to its own shores. Russia's war potential was theoretically greater, but could not be readily brought into action. Eastern



Siberia and Manchuria were connected with Russia by a single-track railroad over 4,000 miles long which had to carry supplies, munitions and troops. So slow was the process that only at the end of the war did Russia have sufficient forces to achieve any local superiority. The Russian Navy was large but antiquated, weakened by corruption, and widely scattered. Japanese ships, marksmanship and tactical skill proved superior.<sup>136</sup>

As the Russians were massing troops on the Korean border and strengthening their naval forces in the Far East, Japan decided to break off negotiations. This was done on February 6, 1904 and hostilities began two days later off Chemulpo in Korea.<sup>137</sup>

During the war public opinion in the United States was strongly favorable to Japan. It was believed to be engaged in a war of self defense and its audacity in challenging the Russian Colossus aroused great admiration. The uniform successes of Japanese forces on land and sea, its excellent hospital and sanitary arrangements and humane treatment of prisoners of war all resounded to its credit, while the stories of Russian incapacity and corruption confirmed the views long held of that country's bureaucracy.<sup>138</sup>



After Japan's naval victory near Tsushima, Foreign Minister Komura requested President Roosevelt "directly and on his own initiative" to invite Russia and Japan to negotiate for peace. By mid June, 1905, both belligerents had accepted the President's good offices. On August 10, 1905, the Peace Conference began at Portsmouth, New Hampshire.<sup>139</sup>

Japan's position at the Portsmouth Peace Conference was augmented by two diplomatic developments. In the first place, President Roosevelt had warned Germany and France that if they made a move against Japan, as they had done in 1895, he would support Japan. At the same time, he feared that Japan's new position of dominance in the Pacific might endanger American interests in the Philippines. He instructed his Secretary of War, William Howard Taft, who was en route to the Philippines, to reach an understanding with the Japanese Prime Minister. Taft informed Katsura that the United States would not interfere if Japanese troops established "sovereignty over Korea to the extent of requiring that Korea enter into no foreign treaties without the consent of Japan." In return, he sought Katsura's assurances that Japan had no aggressive designs upon the Philippines.<sup>140</sup> These assurances were incorporated into the





Taft-Katsura Agreement of July, 1905. Indirectly, at least, the Agreement showed Japan that it would have America's sympathy at the peace conference.<sup>141</sup>

A second diplomatic victory for Japan was the successful extension and broadening of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Only a few days after the Portsmouth Conference began a second Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed. The new alliance, directed against both Russia and Germany, was expanded to include the regions of East Asia and India. Furthermore, a new proviso required that one of the signatories automatically would come to the assistance of the other when war resulted from an attack on these territories by a third power. In return, Great Britain recognized Japan's paramount political, and economic interests in Korea and its right to take "measures of guidance control and protection" in Korea to safeguard those interests. The alliance was to remain in force for ten years.<sup>142</sup>

Unlike the first alliance, it contained no secret clauses nor secret notes modifying any of its provisions.<sup>143</sup>



## E. The Treaty of Portsmouth

The Japanese war strategy had been to win a quick victory and a quick peace before Russia could mobilize its full strength. The early victories were spectacular, but not decisive. Japan was financially exhausted and the foreign powers, even its ally England, would loan no more for fear that Russia would be too severely humbled.<sup>144</sup> Accordingly, Japan asked President Roosevelt to intervene.<sup>145</sup>

Japan's victory destroyed Russian power in the Far East and raised Japan to the rank of a major power. The Treaty of Portsmouth signed in September 1905, negotiated with the assistance of the United States gave Japan Russian rights in the Liaotung Peninsula and sovereignty over the southern half of Sakhalin, with fishing rights in adjacent waters. Japan also acquired control of the South Manchurian Railway, and the right to station troops along the line to protect it. Japan's rights in Korea were recognized by the United States in 1905 and by Great Britain the same year, when a second Anglo-Japanese alliance of broader scope was signed. By an agreement in 1905 with Korea, Japan obtained a protectorate over the country. This was followed in 1910 by a treaty of annexation, which made Korea an integral part



of Japan. In 1908 Japan signed an agreement with the United States to maintain the territorial integrity of China and equality of commercial rights there. In 1911 the Anglo-Japanese alliance was renewed for ten years. Meanwhile, Japan continued to strengthen its military and naval forces.<sup>146</sup> Its sphere of influence now encompassed both Korea and Manchuria and Japan was well along the road toward acquiring a controlling influence over all of Eastern Asia.<sup>147</sup>

Russia was represented by Count Witte and Baron Rosen, while the Japanese emissaries were Takahira and Foreign Minister Komura. Only after considerable negotiation, during which Russia continued to reinforce its Far Eastern armies, was a compromise reached. Roosevelt then prevailed upon Japan to drop the indemnity request and settle for Southern Sakhalin. Consequently, the Treaty of Portsmouth, which was signed on September 5, 1905, provided for:

1. The recognition of Korean independence and of the paramount political, military, and economic interests of Japan therein.
2. The transfer to Japan of Russia's leases and rights in Liaotung, and of the South Manchurian Railway.
3. The withdrawal of foreign troops from Manchuria except Japanese railway guards.



4. The acquisition of the southern half of Sakhalin by Japan and of special fishing rights in adjacent waters.
5. The noninterference by the signatories in measures which China might take in Manchuria for the commercial and industrial development of that area.

Japan's victory enhanced its prestige abroad and enormously boosted its self esteem. At the peace conference, however, it failed to gain all it asked for, and the Japanese leaders allowed their people to blame Roosevelt and the United States rather than Japan's military and financial exhaustion.

In 1905, after the conclusion of the Portsmouth Treaty, Japan took over the administration of Korean foreign policy. Korean foreign affairs, however, had not functioned through normal diplomatic channels but had been conducted by the Emperor himself. He negotiated with foreign residents in Korea who, in turn, contacted their home countries. The Japanese domination of Korean diplomatic affairs, therefore, was not complete. The Korean King requested help from the United States but to no avail. President Roosevelt had already declared that Korea was incapable of governing itself. In July 1907, Korea appealed to the Hague Tribunal for aid. The result was





further tightening of the Japanese bonds. The Korean emperor was forced to abdicate in favor of his son, and a new agreement increased the powers of the Japanese.

In August, 1910, Korea was formally annexed. Japan was now ready for the next step in its plans for Asiatic conquest. All that it needed was an opportunity, and it lost no time in making one. In the acquisition of Korea, Japan obtained considerably more than a foothold on the Asiatic mainland, for the Korean peninsula is about twice the size of New York State; it has a seventeen-hundred mile coastline, numerous good harbors, large mineral wealth, valuable farm lands, is exceedingly rich in undeveloped resources; and in acquiring it Japan added fifty per cent to the size of the Empire.<sup>148</sup>



## V. Japanese Industry at the Beginning of the 20th Century

By the end of the nineteenth century Japan had acquired sufficient industrial capital in the field of consumer goods. Later, she took advantage of the expansion of armaments and the Russo-Japanese War to develop a large industry for producer's goods. The most notable characteristic of this development was the disproportionate size of the armaments industry, so that the economy became unbalanced as arms production outgrew other fields.<sup>149</sup>

Another feature of Japanese industry at the beginning of the twentieth century was the existence of medium and small industries with poor technology and out dated facilities. Many of them were still cottage industries. Some were independent, such as the factories for the production of matches, dry goods, spinning, weaving, dyeing, porcelain and brewing while others, like the manufacturing of machines, belonged to the larger industries. These medium or small scale industries had insufficient facilities, inefficient production and feudalistic labor relations. The larger industries relied on these medium and small industries so that Japanese industry as a whole could not be stabilized. Labor conditions were bad, wages were low, hours were long,



with extensive employment of women, children and semi-feudalistic labor management. The worst position was that of the women workers in cotton weaving, the biggest Japanese industry. The miners were the worst treated male laborers. The first factory law for the protection of workers was enforced as late as 1916.<sup>150</sup>

The chief source of labor power was the countryside. Japanese agriculture in the twentieth century was still run by small scale family labor and there was no large capitalistic management. The small and arable fields made it difficult for the Japanese farmer to benefit from western methods and at the same time were the cause of surplus labor. The overflow from the countryside was used as cheap labor in industry. When the factories faced a depression the workers returned to the agricultural districts where they existed on the minimum requirements of life.<sup>151</sup>

This situation was closely connected with the old inheritance law of Japan, which provided that the eldest son or, failing a son, the eldest daughter, should inherit the land. Second or third sons, if they were fortunate, would be given some land or forest but, if the family was poor, or if the eldest son's livelihood was likely to be endangered by dividing the family property



among the sons, the eldest took all and the second and third sons became either factory or mine workers or apprentices of a merchant. When the second and third sons lost their jobs, it was the duty of their fathers or elder brothers to feed them. In this way the agricultural districts were constantly fostering labor reserves. This, turn, brought about the impoverishment of the farmers.

Since the farmers were not major consumers, Japanese industry had to seek overseas markets at an early stage in its development. This was true particularly in the cotton industry. The expansion of Japanese markets to Korea, in competition with China, is regarded as one of the causes of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-95. Victory in this war made it possible for Japan to extend its markets farther into China. Industrial capital was thus acquired. The steel works, for instance, developed only after Japan, by its victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, gained access to Chinese iron ore and coal, as well as control over the steel works and related facilities in Manchuria and Korea. Thus Japanese industry relied upon colonial expansion for its accumulation of industrial capital. These are weaknesses in Japanese industry which have been in existence from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present.<sup>152</sup>





## A. Establishment of Private Capital

It can be claimed that the industrial revolution in Japan had been achieved by the beginning of the twentieth century, when Japan had developed from the stage of industrial capital to that of private capital. Following the Russo-Japanese War, the accumulation of capital by concentrating industries was initiated. In Japan, however, industries were mostly on a medium or small scale. In 1914, factories with less than ninety-nine workers made up as much as 96 percent of Japanese industry. Factories with more than five hundred workers accounted for only 0.7 percent, but the total number of these large factories made up as much as 25 percent since they had under them many small factories of low productivity.<sup>153</sup>

With regard to the establishment of financial capital, the nationalization of railways in 1906 should be mentioned. Some 31 percent of the mileage of Japanese railways had been under government control and the remaining 69 percent under private ownership. But with most of the railways in Japan nationalized, the value of railways rose considerably and the banks, the largest stockholders of private railways, gained huge profits. The amalgamation of banks also was



accelerated in order to consolidate the controlling power in hands of the banks.<sup>154</sup>

In due course, the powerful financial cliques gradually established themselves as zaibatsu, the most notable being the Mitsui and Mitsubishi. The Mitsui family had laid the foundation of its success in the seventeenth century. The family had once owned a pawn-shop and a brewery in Ise, and also some land. It opened a clothing shop in Edo and then in Osaka and began to accumulate capital by operating money exchanges in Edo, Osaka and Kyoto. Then the family acquired new lands and became the owners of large estates. In the Meiji Restoration the Mitsui family gave financial aid to government and was later rewarded by being allowed to buy the Miike Coal Mine in Kyushu.<sup>155</sup> Mitsui ran many tributary businesses, including warehouses, spinning, paper and sugar mills, all based on the large profits which came from banking, mining and foreign trade.

Mitsubishi had its foundation in shipping, which was first organized under government protection by Iwasaki Yataro after the Meiji Restoration. Mitsubishi monopolized military transportation in the rebellion of Saigo Takamori. It also received, free of charge, thirty-one vessels from the government.<sup>156</sup> Thus the family became the center of



Japanese marine transportation and established the Nippon Yusen Kaisha. It gained profits from the wars with China and Russia.

Sumitomo Zaibatsu established itself early in the seventeenth century in the copper mining industry. After the Meiji Restoration it modernized the Bessi Copper Mine and began to extend its interests to coal mining, copper refining, iron works, banking, foreign trade, warehousing, the silk industry, camphor production and electric lines. Sumitomo thus became the third largest concern in Japan next to Mitsui and Mitsubishi.<sup>157</sup>

Yasuda Zaibatsu also appeared after the Meiji Restoration. It expanded through banking, especially by controlling local banks through the Yasuda Bank which was established after the Russo-Japanese War. It also operated in the fields of insurance, railways and electrical apparatus.

With the development of these zaibatsu, Japanese capital expanded into Korea, Manchuria, China and Formosa. The South Manchuria Railway Company, in particular, established in 1906 after taking over the rights from Russia, was a combination of Mitsui and Mitsubishi interests. The company which became the center of Japanese domination in Manchuria also controlled the Anshan Iron Works and the



Fushun Coal Mines. Okura zaibatsu operated the Penchifu Coal and Iron Company. All these were indispensable to the establishment of a steel industry to be used for Japan's military purposes.<sup>158</sup>

The economic metamorphosis within Japan during the quarter century before World War I was almost as phenomenal as the outward expansion of the boundaries of the Empire. By 1890, at the inception of the constitutional monarchy, the nation's finances had finally been placed on an expenditure. Agricultural resources had been able to keep pace with the increases in population. In fact, there had been a surplus of rice since the quinquennium 1878-1882 which permitted an average annual export of 272,000 koku.<sup>159</sup>

By May, 1915, when Japan confronted China with an ultimatum, demanding compliance with four of the five groups of the Twenty-One Demands, the general economic picture had changed radically. Japan had passed through its initial phase of economic growth and had entered a period of accelerated increase in the individual worker's productivity, in capital investment, in industrial specialization and concentration.<sup>160</sup>

Between 1890 and 1914, Japan's economic growth had increased at a remarkable rate but also showed clear signs of strain. Just when a crisis seemed inevitable, the





acute demands of the Allied Powers for munitions, shipping, and supplies during World War I enabled Japan to solve, at least temporarily, its major economic and financial problems. So long as the foreign market for Japanese goods and services held, the country's economic future could be left to take care of itself. Furthermore, the territorial settlement of the war provided new areas for economic development and exploitation. The colony of Formosa, with its estimated population of 2.6 million in 1898, offered new and tempting markets for the products of Japanese industry. Its area was equal to almost one-tenth of Japan proper; its climate was tropical with abundant rainfall. With a minimum of investment and with the establishment of internal security, the island soon became a valuable source of important raw materials and agricultural products. Camphor, lumber, rice, and sugar were shipped to Japan, and were to become important elements in the Empire's economy.<sup>161</sup>

By the Peace Treaty of 1895, China had recognized that independence of political stability could be maintained in Korea and discriminatory tariffs against foreign goods could be enforced. Japanese merchants and investors were free to exploit Korean markets and resources. In fact, such exploitation would increase in direct proportion to



Japan's control over Korea. On the other hand, Korea's strategic importance would have the greatest impact on Japan's economic development. As it was argued that control of Korea was essential for the nation's security, the creation of a military machine of sufficient strength to achieve this goal was a matter of the highest priority. Specifically, this meant that an enlarged and modernized army and navy were requisites for preventing Russian encroachments in Korea.<sup>162</sup>

Japan's original program in Korea was designed to make it a base for expansion on the Asiatic mainland and a source of raw materials and foodstuffs. Gradually, Korea was supplied with a good system of roads and railways (there were 3,427 miles of railway by 1939), because this system of communications was extremely important for moving troops into Manchuria and to the Russian border. The Japanese closed Korea as an import or export market for foreigners; practically all Korean raw materials were exported to Japan. In 1939, exports from Korea were valued at 1,006,794,000 yen; 73.2 percent (by value) of them went to Japan, 20.4 percent to Japanese-dominated Manchuria, 3.3 percent to the part of China occupied by Japan, and only 0.5 percent to European and American



countries. In the same year, Japan supplied Korea with 88.6 percent of its imports; of the remainder, 5.8 percent came from Manchuria and only 3 percent from Europe and America.<sup>163</sup> When Japan annexed Korea it found an oriental rural setup with rich landlords and numerous poor tenants the outstanding feature. Japan wanted landlords who had a marketable surplus of rice and as a result did everything possible to strengthen the system. Three decades later, the percentage of tenants and owner-tenants (those who have some land of their own, but are compelled to rent additional land) totaled almost 80 percent of the total number of farmers.

Following the rice riots in Japan at the end of the First World War, the Japanese undertook intensive development of Korea as a granary of the Empire. Through various devices, moreover, they appropriated at least one-quarter of the cultivated area of the country, including especially the rice fields. Almost half of the annual yield of rice was exported to Japan, as well as a large proportion of other agricultural products. Even when crops were normal, Korea was itself short of food. Governor-General Ugaki remarked in 1934 that the Korean farmers "would dig out and eat roots of trees on the mountains and fields or



would beg from every door to keep themselves alive."

Evidently the agricultural measures undertaken by the Japanese government in Korea were designed to meet its own needs, not the needs of the local population.<sup>164</sup>

Japan did not encourage the industrial development of Korea for a long while, but in 1929-30 there was a change of policy. Those were the years when the Japanese militarists began to plan their conquests and to prepare for the great war which they openly advocated. A rapid development of industry followed. The gross value of manufactured goods rose from 327,000,000 yen in 1929 to 1,873,000,000 in 1941 (partly, however, due to inflation). Greater and greater investments were poured into Korean industry, and by the end of the war Korea had made substantial progress in developing heavy industry, including machine-tool plants.<sup>165</sup> Even as late as 1938, however, 76 percent of Koreans were occupied in agriculture.





VI. The Assertion of Japanese Hegemony in the Far East:  
1905-1918

A new level of Japanese power in eastern Asia had been reached in 1917-1918. The first World War had enabled Japan to change from a borrowing to a lending nation, from a state with a constantly adverse trade balance to one with a favorable balance; from a nation with inadequate gold reserves to one with a large gold surplus. It had also enabled Japan to give free play to any continental aspirations which it had, without fear of foreign interference. But it was because the necessary preliminary steps had been taken, that Japan was able to utilize the opportunity presented to it by the war. It was because Japan had already introduced modern methods of production that it was able to enlarge its markets, and it was as a result of the earlier efforts to build up a merchant marine that Japanese bottoms were able to monopolize the Pacific shipping. It was also because the ground work had already been laid that Japan was enabled to attain at least temporary hegemony in the Far East.<sup>166</sup>

There were two paths Japan could take. The first was to do, in East Asia, what all the Great Powers had done as



soon as they commanded the means---try to get possession or control over all the countries and principalities that were too weak to resist. Then it would enter the imperial race for mastery over the Asiatic continent, China in particular, hoping to win over the other contenders, because it was nearer the goal. The other path Japan could choose was the direct opposite. It had itself barely escaped subjugation to the West by foresight, intelligent preparation and high resolve. In doing so it had set an example to its still weak neighbors. Japan proved that an Eastern nation could save itself by its own efforts, and that it could take the lead in showing its neighbors how to do so. In short, Japan set itself up as protector of its part of the world against the aggressive West. Japan showed that it could, without formal verbal pronouncement, institute a kind of Monroe Doctrine for Asia, a policy of not interfering with such territorial possessions and political and economic privileges as the West already had but enjoining any expansion of influence.<sup>167</sup>

The political principle expressed in the phrase "a Japanese Monroe Doctrine" has been used more and more frequently by the Japanese to interpret and to justify their policy in the Far East. Occasionally other terms



are employed to express much the same idea, such as "paramount interest," "special interest," "Asia for the Asiatics," "Japanese leadership," and "the right to live." Whatever the name, a fundamental doctrine or policy was developed, and it constituted a major factor in the affairs of Eastern Asia; it goes far to explain Japan's specific actions in China as well as its general attitude toward the Powers in matters concerning the Far East.<sup>168</sup> Viscount Ishii, acting as the Special Ambassador of Japan at Washington in 1917, spoke of a Monroe Doctrine for Asia, and asked Secretary Lansing to recognize that Japan had a "paramount interest" in China. In his published memoirs, this distinguished Japanese statesman writes: "From our point of view, Japan possesses interests superior to other powers in China as a whole, especially in the contiguous regions, much as the position of your country in the Western Hemisphere, especially in Mexico and Central American countries."<sup>169</sup>

Japan chose the first option. There were unmistakable intimations as early as the Portsmouth Peace Conference, at which it insisted on taking over Russia's leasehold on the Liaotung Peninsula and the southern half of the Manchurian railway. Thereby it acquired Port Arthur and Dalny and a



foothold on Chinese soil. China, of course, was forced in a formal agreement to concede the transfer of Russian rights to Japan, with some additional rights that Russia had not had.

The treatment of Korea was even more indicative than was the treatment of Manchuria. The Treaty of Shimonoseki, which ended the China-Japan war in 1895, contained a formal pronouncement of Korea's independence. This independence was reaffirmed in the Nishi-Rosen Convention of 1898, in which Russia and Japan bound themselves not to infringe on Korea's political and territorial integrity. The Treaty of Portsmouth included Russian recognition of Japan's paramount interests in Korea, and Japan at once made clear its construction of that provision. Even before the end of the war, however, it had left no doubt as to what it would do if it had a free hand in Korea. Simultaneously with the attack on Port Arthur, Japan landed a military force in the port of Chemulpo and occupied Seoul. On February 23, 1904, before the war was a month old, a protocol was signed between Korea and Japan, under Japanese guns of course, which laid the foundation for a protectorate. On November 17, two months after peace with Russia was concluded, Japan wrung from the helpless court at Seoul a convention by





which it obtained control of Korea's foreign relations and the right to maintain a Resident in Seoul.<sup>170</sup>

As one of the preliminaries to the final contest, the first Anglo-Japanese agreement was negotiated in 1902. This was founded inter alia on a recognition of the independence of Korea with, however, a recognition as well of Japan's peculiar political, commercial and industrial interests in the peninsula. The revised agreement of 1905 provided that "Japan, possessing paramount political, military, and economic interests in Korea, Great Britain recognizes the right of Japan to take such measures of guidance, control, and protection in Korea as she may deem proper and necessary to safeguard and advance these interests, provided always that such measures are not contrary to the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations."<sup>171</sup>

Following the war a protectorate was established and Prince Ito became the first Resident-General. This status was maintained until 1910, when a treaty of annexation was concluded between the Korean ruler and the Japanese Emperor, represented by General Terauchi, the Japanese Resident. Incorporation into the Japanese Empire, of course, ended for the time being the international personality of Korea. One



consequence of the international acceptance of this change was the termination of foreign governmental intrigue in the country although, from time to time, accusations were brought against American missionaries that they were preaching seditious doctrines in their schools and, as late as 1920, a British subject, resident at Antung, was arrested when in Korea "because he had long been suspect as an abettor and friend of the Korean independence agitators."<sup>172</sup> Internal turmoil ceased except for the independence movement.

From the expansion of trade Japan naturally gained the greatest advantage; almost ninety percent of the total trade being with Japan.<sup>173</sup> In the internal development of the country, the predominance of Japanese interest was even more marked. Japanese actions were motivated by the desire to make the area of greater value to Japan rather than by an interest in improving the condition of the Korean people. This is not to deny that the Koreans benefited materially by many of the improvements made. On the other side, it must be recognized that the forcible introduction of the Japanese language at the expense of the Korean; the suppression of Korean literature and of Korean institutions; the



expropriation and sale, mostly to Japanese settlers, of a large part of the public lands which had been of common use to people; the forced sale of much of the best privately owned property, with the consequent migration into Manchuria of the people whose lands had been taken; the repression of speech and suppression of Korean papers; and the exhibition of much brutality in dealing with the people did not promote the free and full acceptance of Japanese overlordship. The Koreans were not satisfied with the educational efforts of Japan. While there were 380 elementary schools solely for Japanese children, there were only about four hundred for the Koreans, although the Japanese constituted less than two percent of the total population. This seemed rather out of proportion. Furthermore, the schools for Koreans were designed primarily to make them good subjects of Japan, to which emphatic exception was taken.<sup>174</sup>

The Koreans' objections to Japanese rule, together with the 1918 world-wide enthusiasm for democracy and the principle of the self-determination of peoples, produced a serious revolt against the Japanese in Korea in 1919. This took the internal form of passive resistance and the external form of an appeal to the Paris Peace Conference



which, however, refused to take cognizance of the claims of the "Provisional Government of Korea" which was organized at Shanghai. The latter was dispersed by the authorities administering the French settlement, the internal Korean movement was ruthlessly suppressed, and Japanese prestige was maintained. Many malcontents were left on the Manchurian side of the border, in Siberia and elsewhere. The Japanese authorities dispersed the fugitives in Manchuria after several raids on Chinese territory, and the independence movement, at least for a time, collapsed. The revolt resulted in the modification of Japan's Korean policy.<sup>175</sup>





## A. Japan in Manchuria

There are conflicting views concerning Japan's activities in Manchuria from 1905 to 1914, and as many conclusions as to their justification. The Japanese position, in essence, was that they had made tremendous sacrifices in men and resources to drive the Russians out of South Manchuria, and that by treaty they succeeded to a position there which justified them in regarding it as a "sphere of interest." They claimed that in the development of their interests in this sphere they made use only of such methods as the European states had employed in China and elsewhere, and they argued that until those methods were generally and universally repudiated they should not be condemned for utilizing them. They insisted that they were under only two limitations in their succession to the Russian position that they would observe the Open Door principle, by the three propositions of Secretary Hay's Open Door circular of 1899, and that they would respect the independence and integrity of China. Those pledges they claimed to have observed at least until 1931. Consequently they maintained that the criticism leveled against their Manchurian activities was totally unwarranted.<sup>176</sup>



It was in Manchuria that Japan most clearly committed itself to imperialist orthodoxy, participating in the purest imperialistic rites of division of prospective spoils by rivals both desiring the whole, suspicious of each other, but not yet ready to try conclusions.<sup>177</sup>

After some preliminary maneuvers with France, Russia's ally, as go between, Russia and Japan contracted a new agreement on July 30, 1907, which sought to make precise the future relations between them in East Asia.<sup>178</sup> Coupled with this was a reaffirmation of the Open Door principle more in the nature of a nonaggression pact and containing secret clauses, relating to spheres of interest in Manchuria, Russia's special rights in Mongolia, and Japanese domination of Korea.<sup>179</sup> The secret agreement addressed the subject that interested the two parties and brought them together. A line was drawn in Manchuria marking two spheres, Russia having the North and Japan the South.<sup>180</sup>

Neither would interfere in the other's sphere in political or economic matters. Russia again recognized Japan's "special interests" in Korea, while Japan recognized Russia's special interests in Mongolia; thereby



confirming the death sentence for Korea and Mongolia. The new rapprochement between Russia and Japan (no one had any illusion that the public version of the treaty between them was the whole of it) raised, and justly, the fear that the two main contenders for Manchuria were now working together instead of checking each other as before from which it might be assumed that Manchuria was close to being lost to China.<sup>181</sup>

To underline their determination to resist any outside attempts to interfere with their special rights in Manchuria, a new Russo-Japanese Convention was concluded in July 1910. Under its terms the two signatories agreed to maintain the status quo in Manchuria; to take joint action if their respective interests were threatened; and, while developing railway communications in Manchuria, to abstain from competing with each other in such work. Like the 1907 convention, which the new agreement superseded, secret clauses were added defining their respective spheres of interest in Manchuria and imposing restrictions on each other in these spheres. Two years later, in 1912, a further understanding between the two was reached. This was in the form of a secret treaty under which Mongolia was divided into similar spheres with eastern Inner



Mongolia, adjoining Manchuria, allotted to Japan.<sup>182</sup>

The Chinese therefore decided to push their own influence in Manchuria by building railroads, preferably with foreign capital, which would give other Powers a stake in maintaining the status quo. The other Powers too began to interest themselves in the development of Manchuria, mainly through railway construction. The British obtained from the Chinese a concession to build one line although the contract was never fulfilled partly because of Japanese objection. The United States also intervened in Manchurian politics for the first time. After the Russo-Japanese war, E. H. Harriman made tenders for the purchase of the South Manchuria Railway. He was rebuffed but his interest did not fade. With Taft in the White House and Philander C. Knox as Secretary of State, dollar diplomacy became the guiding principle. The U.S. government shared Harriman's interest and actively engaged in Manchurian politics. Railways became the tokens in the international struggle.<sup>183</sup>





## B. Knox's Manchurian Meddling

Japan had received both moral and financial support from the U.S. at the time of its war with Russia, but Japan had been eyed with some suspicion by the United States Government since the days just prior to the American annexation of Hawaii in 1898, when there were disputes between the Hawaiian and Japanese Governments over the question of Japanese immigration and when Japan had adopted a threatening attitude. America, at that time, was already being urged by believers in its "manifest destiny" to play a leading role on the Asiatic side of the Pacific. U.S. acquisition of the Philippines and Guam, as a result of the war with Spain, brought it appreciably nearer its goal. Hawaii might be the naval "key of the Pacific" and the commercial crossroads of that ocean, but the Philippines were more immediately accessible to China where the other great powers were engaged in a scramble for the commercial and strategic advantages offered. To put a stop to this unseemly display and to ensure equal opportunities for all in the trade, navigation and commerce of China, the United States Secretary of State, John Hay, in 1899 induced the powers to accept the principle of the "Open Door and Equal Opportunity".<sup>184</sup> Russia and Germany



made it clear, in the years immediately preceding the Russo-Japanese War, that they did not recognize this principle as applying to Manchuria. Japan, after its defeat of Russia, took the same view and aroused similar criticism.<sup>185</sup> The aggressive Japanese and Russians had by 1907 divided China's Manchuria into southern and northern economic spheres of influence. The Russians enjoyed a dominant position in northern Manchuria, with their key Chinese Eastern Railway, while the Japanese, with their vital South Manchuria Railway, were firmly entrenched in southern Manchuria. Knox feared, with good reason, that the increasing influence of these two outside powers boded ill for the integrity of China and the sanctity of the Open Door Policy. He, therefore, cast about for a scheme that would enable him to use American dollars to block this ominous penetration.<sup>186</sup>

Secretary Knox conceived the idea of cutting through the whole net of rivalries in Manchuria by internationalizing the entire railway system of the area with ownership vested in China but the capital and administration international.<sup>187</sup>

Knox finally evolved his surprising Manchurian Railroad proposal which he communicated to the interested powers late in 1909. Its essence was that American and European banking groups would lend the Chinese government a huge sum of money.



China, in turn, would use the funds thus advanced to regain full control of Manchuria by buying the railroads. Knox privately confessed that he was attempting to "smoke Japan out" from her dominant position.<sup>188</sup>

The alternative plans proposed were: (1) The Russian and Japanese railroads in Manchuria should be purchased by China aided financially by the powers; they should then be supervised by nationals of the co-operating powers, and materials and employees should be procured from these nations "upon an equitable basis inter se." (2) Great Britain and the United States might give diplomatic support to China in the construction of a line from Chinchow to Aigun which would approximately parallel the South Manchuria railway but at no point be nearer to it than one hundred fifty miles, and they might invite<sup>189</sup>

"the interested powers, friendly to complete commercial neutralization of Manchuria, to participate in the financing and construction of that line and of such additional lines as future commercial development may demand; and, at the same time, to supply funds for the purchase by China of such existing lines as might be offered for inclusion in this system."<sup>190</sup>

Secretary Knox communicated his scheme to the British government in November, 1909, without first sounding out all the interested parties. Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign



Secretary, with a fine instinct for diplomatic generalities while expressing approval of the "general principle" of the first plan, suggested temporary postponement of its consideration. As for the alternative plan, he briefly suggested the desirability of Japanese participation in the Chinchow-Aigum line.<sup>191</sup>

Secretary Knox next instructed the United States representatives in Peking, Tokyo, St. Petersburg, Berlin and Paris to broach his scheme to the governments to which they were respectively accredited.<sup>192</sup> China and Germany expressed approval. Russia and Japan refused definitely to have anything to do with neutralization; the former on the ground that there was no need for it and that Russian interests would suffer, the latter on the ground that the plan was not in accord with the Treaty of Portsmouth, that it provided for a system not to be found elsewhere in China, and that divided responsibility would work to the disadvantage of the public.<sup>193</sup> France agreed with Russia and Japan.

The proposed Chinchow-Aigun line was also blocked by Russia and Japan during the early months of 1910. Russia and Japan now decided to close ranks against all interlopers in their private preserve. They moved to make their quasi-alliance more explicit. There were more negotiations, and





in 1910 another treaty was concluded, part of it public and the more important part secret. This agreement reaffirmed the division of spheres made in 1907, but sent further than the pledge not to interfere with rights in the other's sphere.<sup>194</sup>

Inner Mongolia was now included in the area allocated to the "special interests" of the two parties, Russia getting a free hand in western Inner Mongolia and Japan in eastern Inner Mongolia. Outer Mongolia, incidentally, had previously been set aside by Russia for its exclusive purposes. Korea having been settled, and Manchuria in the process of settlement, Mongolia was now designated for transactions of the same order.<sup>195</sup>

The fruits of Knox's abortive Manchurian scheme were almost wholly bitter. He weakened the integrity of China instead of strengthening it by driving Japan and Russia closer together. He not only offended the Japanese by his inept approach but apparently reversed Roosevelt's policy under the Root-Takahira Agreement of 1908, an agreement which recognized Japan's special position in Manchuria.<sup>196</sup>

Regardless of the approval or disapproval of its nationals in China, England by renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1905, and by the signing of the Russian convention of 1907 had given evidence of its decision to treat the Far East from



the viewpoint for the welfare of the empire as a whole.<sup>197</sup>

England was bound to Japan, and Japan and Russia were now allies. Knox's diplomacy forced Russia and Japan to admit officially, if indirectly, that their declarations and promises to China and to the United States with reference to the Open Door were worthless.<sup>198</sup>

Knox's Far Eastern policy has been branded as one of "bluff and back down." His naive, lone-hand tactics were foredoomed to failure. The United States, acting alone, had neither the naval nor the land forces to halt the Japanese or the Russians in the Far East. Even had the U.S. boasted a formidable army, public opinion would not have tolerated a war over faraway economic interests that were of such slight importance.<sup>199</sup>

Japan and Russia had fought one of the most terrible wars since Waterloo, and in less than a decade had become partners. But since they were partners in the acquisition and distribution of loot, in hand and in prospect, the change in relations may have been external and temporary rather than genuine and lasting. Japan's role in the politics of East Asia was now unmistakable. The island power was to shape forces and events in East Asia for a generation and ultimately to spread ruin there.<sup>200</sup>



VII. World War I:  
Japan Becomes Aggressive

Precipitated by events outside of Asia, a still greater transformation was now about to begin for East Asia. The European war broke out. Asia was not even dimly aware of why the war came and what brought it about and was even less concerned, but it was destined to be only a little less affected than Europe.<sup>201</sup>

In September, 1914, following the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, President Yuan Shih-K'ai remarked to the American minister, "Japan is going to take advantage of this war to get control of China." Contemporaneously, another high official, Admiral Ts'ai T'ing-Kan, observed, "Here are the beginnings of another Manchuria. Aggressive Japan in Shantung is different from any European tenant."<sup>202</sup> As early as August 3, China requested the United States to obtain from the European belligerents assurances that the European war would not carry into Chinese territories or waters, a request which the American government acted upon without success.<sup>203</sup>

The republic, while proclaiming its neutrality by presidential mandate, began negotiations with Germany



and China with a view to the restoration of the German Leased Territory of Kiaochow to China. Under the terms of its agreement, Germany had the right to give up its leasehold at Kiaochow at any time in return for a more suitable port elsewhere in China. In Tokyo the cabinet had been closely watching developments in Europe. The feeling prevailed that at last the time had come to destroy Teutonic influence in eastern Asia and avenge that part of the "insult" suffered at the hands of Germany in connection with the tripartite intervention of 1895.<sup>204</sup>

The European war put the whole Far East in flux. The first, and perhaps most important, thing it did was to give Japan a free hand in Asia. Europe was engaged in its own death struggle and had neither time nor strength for remote areas. America, at first unengaged, was partially involved through its emotions and through its desire to maintain freedom of the seas. America, therefore, could give only half of its attention to the Far East until 1917, and after that no attention was given at all.<sup>205</sup>

The outbreak of war in Europe in August, 1914, and





its global repercussions swiftly shifted interest from the national to the international arena. Here, too, Okuma was to follow an aggressive policy. Despite his interest in an earlier life in parliamentary government and in the rights of the people, he did not apply his modified concepts of the rights of man to questions of international relations. Indeed, the policies he advocated toward China were a sad commentary on his "liberalism." As Premier in 1915, he sponsored a policy which forced China to become subservient both politically and economically to Japan. To Okuma and his colleagues, such liberalism as they advocated could not be allowed to interfere with Japan's destiny to secure a predominant and ruling position in East Asia.<sup>206</sup>

Japan's leading statesmen were constantly on the alert for any opportunity that would permit them to achieve this objective. They had been apprehensive of the effect on Japan of the Chinese Revolution and of the downfall of the Manchu dynasty on February 12, 1912. Although the Japanese public in general supported the revolutionaries, the government announced that it would remain neutral. While the clan bureaucrats were casting covetous eyes on Manchuria and north China and were



hopeful that they would be able to extend Japan's influence on the continent, World War I gave them the chance they were seeking.<sup>207</sup>

A new China policy developed rapidly under the leadership of Foreign Minister Kato Komei. While Ambassador to London, he had received assurances from British Foreign Minister Viscount Grey that England would not object to Japan's taking up with China, at an appropriate time, the question of the extension of the leases in Kwantung and South Manchuria. Upon his return to Tokyo to become Foreign Minister in the third Katsura Cabinet, Kato continued his efforts to support a strong Japanese policy toward China. When the Okuma Cabinet was formed in April, 1914, Kato was again appointed Foreign Minister. It was not surprising, therefore, that with the outbreak of World War I he advocated an aggressive foreign policy. Kato had concluded that the preoccupation of European countries with the war against Germany and with the Entente would leave Japan free to act as it desired in China.<sup>208</sup>

Japan's entrance into World War I derived its sanction from a double basis: The nation's commitments under the Anglo-Japanese alliance, and the larger



political and military purposes of Japan's emerging Asian policy. On August 7, 1914, three days after its declaration of war, Great Britain requested Japan to destroy the German fleet in Pacific waters. The decision of the Japanese government, made on August 8, was to demand of Germany not only surrender of its armed ships in Asian waters (thus complying with the British request) but also surrender of the Kiaochow leasehold in Shantung. On August 23, as Germany ignored Tokyo's ultimatum, Japan entered the war. This momentous decision to join Great Britain in the war (as explained by Count Kato Komei, the foreign minister) was not based on legal obligations of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, for "the general conditions were not such as to impose upon Japan the duty to join the war under treaty obligations," but "as a voluntary expression of friendship toward Great Britain under the Alliance."<sup>209</sup> What Japan meant was that it welcomed an opportunity to destroy German influence in East Asia and to enhance its own international position.<sup>210</sup> In taking the initiative, Britain apparently sought an explicitly limited Japanese participation. That did not interest the Japanese government. The Japanese at first based their participation on



their obligations so strongly after they had driven the Germans from their holdings in Shantung province and from the islands in the Pacific north of the equator.<sup>211</sup>

Japan had utilized the Anglo-Japanese alliance for its own purposes, and it had no intention of joining in the European slaughter. But its willingness to help with strikes against German shipping extended to the South Pacific. During the fall of 1914 Japanese naval forces occupied the German islands in the North Pacific; the Marshalls, Marianas, Palaus, the Carolines, Yap, all names that would become household words during World War II, shifted from German to Japanese hands. By 1917 Japanese naval units controlled the entire South Pacific and Indian Ocean areas. Repeated British requests for Japanese help in the Mediterranean area brought a convoy force in 1917. Further French and Russian requests for Japanese army units to join the ground fighting in Europe fell on deaf ears.<sup>212</sup>

World War I thus saw Japan develop a strong bargaining position in international politics. Before the dispatch of Japanese naval units to the Mediterranean in 1917, secret agreements with England, France, Italy and Russia brought guarantees that Japan's claims to the German





leaseholds in Shantung and to the Pacific islands north of the equator would be honored in the peace settlement. As a result of Allied support, the Pacific islands were mandated to Japanese authority and Shantung left to Sino-Japanese settlement.<sup>213</sup>

To inform the rest of the world of Japan's intentions, the Premier, Count Okuma, cabled a message for publication in the United States in which he said:

"Japan has no territorial ambition, and hopes to stand as the protector of peace in the Orient."<sup>214</sup>

After the fall of Tsingtao on November 7, the Japanese proceeded in a systematic manner to establish themselves in Shantung province. They took over the German interests outside of the leased area as a matter of course, including the Tsinanfu-Tsingtao railway, the line southward from Kaomi, the mines developed by Germany in the fifteen years of its occupation, and the various public and private property rights of Germany throughout the province. Not stopping with a mere succession to the German rights, titles, and privileges, Japan added, or attempted to add, considerably to them.<sup>215</sup>

Japan also took over from the Chinese, on the plea of military necessity, the policing of the railroads



outside the leased territory. Japanese replaced Germans in the Chinese customs house at Tsingtao.<sup>216</sup> So far as the evacuation of the territory and its "restoration to China" was concerned, the Japanese Foreign Minister, in reply to questions in the Diet, said that Japan was under no obligation to restore the leased area, as its pledge had been made subject to Germany's handing it over without trouble. The sacrifice of Japanese men and the expenditure of Japanese money in the reduction of the port had created a new situation, one which might have to resolve itself along different lines. What these new lines were to be was shortly indicated.<sup>217</sup>

On January 7, 1915, with German resistance in Shantung ended and with it the need for the military zone, President Yuan Shih-K'-ai informed the Japanese that China's neutrality would again extend over all of the province of Shantung outside of the leased territory. The Japanese immediately protested against the ending of the military zone as an unfriendly act, seizing upon it as the excuse for the presentation to the Chinese government of far-reaching demands.<sup>218</sup>

With the cancellation by Peking of the war zone on



January 7, 1915, the moment had arrived and, on the night of the eighteenth, Minister Hioki personally presented the Kato demands to President Yuan instead of using the foreign office, the regular channel for diplomatic communications.<sup>219</sup>



## A. The Twenty-One Demands

The Russian maneuvers in Outer Mongolia and the British penetration of Tibet were conducted under the pretence of supporting local autonomous movements against an inefficient, corrupt central authority and such justifications could be advanced however flimsy. Japan's intervention in China, on the other hand, was brazenly brutal and lacked any of the arguments one might advance to defend the Russian or British actions. Japan's territorial ambition was directed against heavily populated China proper rather than against the outer territories sparsely inhabited by Mongolian and Tibetan minorities.

Japan's ambition with regard to China was common knowledge, but until World War I Japan had not been able to translate its ambition into reality, partly because of China's distrust of Japanese motives and designs after the Sino-Japanese War and partly because of the lack of capital on the part of Japan to pursue effective dollar diplomacy such as Western powers then pursued in China. Meanwhile, Japan was waiting patiently for the arrival of a "psychological moment" when it could fulfill its am-





bitious.<sup>220</sup>

In addition to both general and specific tendencies toward Japanese expansion clearly perceptible throughout the post-restoration period, several developments had occurred during recent years, in connection with China, which contributed to the Kato policy. Among these were problems related to (1) railway construction in southern Manchuria (1907-10); (2) the activities of the international consortium; (3) the fear that the Chinese government might obtain control of the Hanyehping Company (China's largest iron and steel works) and might oust Japanese interests therein; (4) the fear that, with American financial aid, a naval base might be established in Fukien; (5) the growing influence of Great Britain in Tibet and of Russia in Mongolia; and (6) the old policy of the Chinese to divide and rule by playing off one "barbarian" against another manifested during a generation of increasing Japanese encroachment upon the empire by "befriending the Far and antagonizing the Near."<sup>221</sup>

On January 18, 1915, Japanese Minister Hioki at Peking presented to President Yuan Shih-K'ai a group of twenty-one demands (16 demands and 5 'desires') designed to "insure" Japan's position in China at a time when Europe



was preoccupied with war. Japan began a new chapter in its policy of expansion. In particular, it hoped to establish a solid legal basis for its special interests in Manchuria.<sup>222</sup>

Although European powers had recognized Japanese claims in Manchuria, China had not. A second phase of Japanese policy in 1915 concerned itself with the nation's position and influence south of the Great Wall in China proper. In the scramble there for railway and min. concessions, Japan, as a debtor nation, was at a disadvantage against European and American competitors. As seen in Tokyo, the weakness of Japan's position could only be corrected by the assertion of specific rights and, if possible, of a general and paramount influence over all of China.<sup>223</sup>

Foreign Minister Kato envisaged the twenty-one demands as an attempt at an ('across-the-board') settlement of outstanding problems in exchange for Japan's promise to return Shantung. They were divided into five groups: Group I dealt with Shantung where large numbers of Japanese troops were stationed and where an administrative arrangement of some sort would have to be negotiated between Japan and China; Group II referred to Manchuria



where Japan's leases were due to run out in 1923 and where it wanted to obtain extensions of the leases to ninety-nine years. The other groups of demands covered industries, arsenals, railways, harbors, and dockyards; the whole spectrum of China's modernization.<sup>224</sup>

Group V was considered by the Japanese to be different in character from the rest, containing only 'desirable items' whose adjustments would be beneficial to both countries.<sup>225</sup> Its major items were: (1) the employment of Japanese as political, financial, and military advisers in the Chinese central government; (2) the right of Japanese to own land for the construction of hospitals, temples and schools; (3) the joint control of Chinese police force; (4) the purchase of Japanese arms by China and the establishment of ammunition factories jointly controlled by China and Japan; (5) the granting of railroad construction rights to Japan in the central lakes region; (6) China was to consult Japan if it wished to borrow foreign capital to finance railroad construction, mining, and other economic activities such as harbor improvement in Fukien province; and (7) China was to grant Japan the right of "preaching religion" in China.



The last article was perhaps the most ironical; obviously the Japanese had in mind the Western missionaries who allegedly served the imperialist interests of their respective countries.<sup>226</sup>

None of the proposals affected China's formal independence, sovereignty, or integrity. Actually, China would be brought under the sway of Japan in the manner most approved by modern imperialism.<sup>227</sup>

President Yuan Shih-kai was desperate. Sinister influences had been brought to bear against him by the Japanese Minister and others. Full advantage was taken of the fact that Yuan was obsessed with the idea of restoring the monarchy to China with himself as the first Emperor of the new dynasty. He was reminded that the whole country was seething with unrest, that the ranks of those opposed to such a movement were daily swelling, and that their determination to block such a move, by revolution if necessary, was growing stronger daily. Aided by Japanese finance, it was insinuated, this movement would become irresistible. Agree to Japan's demands, Yuan Shih-Kai was told, and the road to the dragon throne would lie open. Refuse, and Japan would lend its support





to the revolutionists. To refuse would mean irrevocable defeat for all such grandiose plans and the loss of all power, if not life itself. On May 8, President Yuan Shih-Kai accepted the demands as they stood.<sup>228</sup>

It is worthwhile to summarize the agreements actually reached between China and Japan dated May 25, 1915. This can be done most conveniently and simply by geographical areas, beginning north of the Great Wall and working southwards.<sup>229</sup>



## B. The 1915 Treaties

The treaty respecting South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia provided: (1) that the lease of Port Arthur and Dalny and the terms of the South Manchurian and the Antung-Mukden railway agreements be extended to 99 years; (2) that Japanese subjects might reside and travel in South Manchuria, engage in business and manufacturing, and lease land outside of the treaty ports for trade or agricultural purposes; (3) that the Chinese government would give its permission to any joint Chinese-Japanese enterprises; (4) that Japanese subjects should be subject to Chinese local law, but that the extraterritorial system, so far as the trial of offenders was concerned, should persist; (5) that China should open to foreign trade and residence suitable places in Eastern Inner Mongolia; (6) that the Kirin-Changchun railway loan agreement should be revised in favor of Japan. By separate notes China conceded: (1) that Japanese subjects should have the right to open mines in certain areas specified by the Japanese; (2) that if it sought foreign capital for railway construction in Manchuria in the future, application



would be made first to Japan; and (3) that if it found it necessary to employ foreign financial, military, or police advisers in South Manchuria, they should be Japanese.<sup>230</sup>

The Shantung treaty provided: (1) that China should give "full assent to all matters upon which the Japanese government may hereafter agree with the German government relating to the disposition of all rights, interests, and concessions which Germany, by virtue of treaties or otherwise, possesses in relation to the Province of Shantung"; (2) that Japanese capitalists should have the right to build the Chefoo-Weihsien railway, in the event Germany abandoned the privilege of financing it; and (3) that additional places for foreign residence and trade should be opened by China herself in the province. In an exchange of notes, China agreed not to alienate any territory within the province or islands along the coast to any foreign power on any pretext whatsoever.

In a separate note, Japan indicated its intentions of restoring the leased territory of Kiaochow Bay to China on the condition that China would open the whole of the bay as a commercial port, that it would set aside an area to be designated by the Japanese government as a



residential concession to be under the exclusive jurisdiction of Japan, and that an international settlement would be provided for the residence of other foreigners if they desire it.<sup>231</sup>As for Fukien province, the Chinese government stated that it had given no permission to foreign nations to construct on its coast dockyards, coaling stations for military use or naval bases and that it had no intention of borrowing foreign capital for those purposes. It is apparent that Japan's objectives on the continent had changed from the purely territorial to the economic. It had first urged, as justification of its policy, the need for expansion on the continent, so that by colonization it might take care of its excess population.

From 1914 on Japan did not demand control of territory for colonization because all of its experiments in that direction had failed. It was not Japanese farmers who were to be found in Korea, Formosa and South Manchuria, but shopkeepers, concession-hunters and developers.<sup>232</sup>This partly explains the change in objective. To this must be added a change at home which tremendously affected the national development. The outbreak of the war greatly stimulated Japanese industry. Just as in the United States,





those industries related to war supply were expanded in every direction. In Japan the established companies both in the field of munitions supply and other allied areas, and in the field of non-military production for the purpose of supplying markets temporarily vacated by Europe, were enormously expanded, and new enterprises sprang up over night. This industrial expansion strikingly called attention to Japan's reliance on foreign nations for certain essential raw materials for industry such as coal and iron. It caused Japanese statesmen to think of the war as an opportunity to secure these essentials. Furthermore, a capitalist class had been developing in Japan as a result of its industrial development prior to and especially after the war with Russia. This class became all-important during World War I.<sup>233</sup>

With the signing of the treaties the negotiations ended, but the incident was not closed. The people of China had not consented. The treaties had been signed by President Yuan Shih-Kai and his associates, but the signatures had been secured by an ultimatum backed by force, although there had been no war between the two nations. They had never been ratified by any Chinese legislative body and successive Chinese Governments



declared them to be null and void.<sup>234</sup> Japan, however, regarded them as binding, and was ready for its next move.



### C. The 1917 Secret Treaties

Japan had laid a foundation for an Asiatic empire, with China as the colonial center. The direct thrust having failed of complete success, Japan now took the oblique approach. It adopted a time-honored strategy in the relations of strong and weak nations.<sup>235</sup> It would attempt to conquer a country through some of that country's own nationals. It would look for political factions that wanted support against their rivals and give support in return for doing Japan's bidding; the technique of finding, establishing, and working through puppets. In the feudal atmosphere that prevailed in China this was easy.

Through skillful manipulation, both by Chinese and by Japanese there coalesced in north China a group of the more unscrupulous so called warloards and their associates. This group became known as the Anfu Club.<sup>236</sup> The mechanism for exerting influence was found in Japanese loans (the Nishihara loans). Their total amount and exact purpose were never accurately known, but they were estimated at \$150,000,000. What was more serious was that as security for the loans Japan was beginning to get



a mortgage on China's communications and natural resources, and would have succeeded in foreclosure on them had events outside the Far East failed to impose a check.<sup>237</sup>

For a period of a year or two, however, the deciding voice in China's internal political affairs was Japanese, not Chinese. With the signing of these treaties the negotiations ended, but the incident was not closed.

From the outbreak of the war to the Versailles treaty of 1919, Japan's wartime foreign policy remained constant. Having successfully concluded its negotiations with China, Japan now turned to the West to obtain a closer understanding with the leading Allied and associated powers and with the United States. Negotiations were first started with Russia. These resulted in a secret treaty being concluded in July, 1916, whereby the signatories formed a defensive alliance to protect their "vital interests" in China. They agreed to protect China from domination by a third power hostile to them. Thus Japan had assurances of Russia's assistance in preventing third-power interference with the special rights secured through the Twenty-One Demands.<sup>238</sup> The United States was





the only country in a position to protest effectively against the 1915 agreements, since they affected its treaty rights in China. It did make a formal diplomatic statement of its attitude, but went no further in the way of protest.

Even before the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia was to annul the benefits which might have been derived from this treaty, negotiations were begun with Great Britain for support of Japan's war claims. On January 27, 1917, the two governments exchanged views on a secret treaty in which each hoped to gain concessions from the other. The British sought support for their claims to the former German islands in the Pacific, south of the equator. Since Germany had announced its resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare a few days after the negotiations began, the Allies were anxious to receive both logistical and naval escort support from Japan for Atlantic and Mediterranean convoys.<sup>239</sup>

In April, 1917, the United States went to war with Germany, and one of its first acts was to begin pressure on China to join the Allies. Just why has never been completely understood. It may have been natural American exuberance, or it may have been the belief that there



was an advantage to having China represented at the peace table, where the issue between itself and Japan, growing out of Japan's wartime acts, could be brought to judgment. At any rate, Americans in Peking, both diplomatic and unofficial, began a whirlwind campaign of persuasion in the best manner of Washington, D.C. lobbying.<sup>240</sup> Furthermore, the Allies were hopeful that Japan would be able to persuade China to break off diplomatic relations with Germany.

In return for these services, Great Britain was willing to support Japan's demands for the former German rights in Shantung and to the Pacific Islands north of the equator. Despite Japan's refusal to comply with all of the Allies' requests, the British Government agreed on February 16, 1917, to:

.....support Japan's claims in regards to the disposal of Germany's rights in Shantung and possessions in islands north of the Equator at the Peace Conference, it being understood that the Japanese Government will treat in the same spirit Great Britain's claims to German islands south of the Equator.<sup>241</sup>

At the same time France agreed to support the Japanese claims on the condition that Japan would encourage the movement in China toward joining in the war on the Allied side. Italy entered into a similar agreement. All of these agreements, made in 1917 before the entrance of the



United States into the war, were kept officially secret until the peace conference.

They were made the more necessary because of the outbreak of revolution in Russia in March, 1917, for Japan had attempted to safeguard its position by agreement in the summer of 1916 with the Czar's government, when the two states entered into a firm alliance for the published purpose of preserving the peace of the Far East, but, by secret protocols, with a view to delimiting their respective interests in Eastern Asia and to cooperating in their maintenance against any attack whatsoever. In this delimitation of their interests, Russia recognized the changes made in the status quo by the Japanese 1915 Agreements with China and accepted them as necessary of protection under the alliance, while Japan recognized the Russian advance into Outer Mongolia during the years 1912-1915.<sup>242</sup>

China entered the war, but did so in ignorance of the most vital consideration affecting its decision: its position at the peace conference.



#### D. The Lansing-Ishii Agreement

In 1917, the prospects for Japanese freedom of action in China were better than ever. The distress of western Europe brought calls for Chinese participation from the Allied side, a participation encouraged by European belligerents in the hopes of access to Chinese food and manpower. In the end, China contributed a small army of laborers to the western front. For the Anfu generals, participation in the war seemed to promise access to capital and munitions, both desperately needed, and a seat at the conference that would decide disposition of the German assets the Twenty-One Demands had transferred to Japan.<sup>243</sup>

Terauchi and his advisers talked of a Sino-Japanese military alliance that would secure the northern border against the Communist infection that followed the revolution in Siberia. China needed all the aid it could get, but only Japan stood ready to lend and direct. Japan was a capital surplus nation for the first time during World War I. Naturally, Japan expected to play the leading role in helping China to take part in World War I.





Terauchi had several aims. One was to secure American acknowledgment of Japan's position in China. The Lansing-Ishii notes, signed and released in November 1917 (and eliminated by negotiations only in 1932), seemed to serve this purpose.<sup>244</sup>

The note reaffirmed the adherence of the two powers to the classic formulas of the Open Door and the integrity of China. It later developed that the United States understood one thing and Japan another by this recognition of its special interests. In a secret protocol, Lansing sought to restrain Japan by getting it to agree not to ".....take advantage of present conditions to seek special rights or privileges in China which would abridge the rights of citizens or subjects of other friendly states".<sup>245</sup>

The prestige of the United States in the Far East was far from enhanced by the exchange of the Lansing-Ishii notes; study of the documents, nevertheless, makes clear that, in negotiating them, the Wilson administration was attempting to weaken the effects upon China of the Twenty-One Demands and the ensuing treaties. The notes were finally cancelled on April 14, 1932, consequent upon the signing of the Nine-Power Treaty of Washington.<sup>246</sup> Decision having apparently been reached that negative



morality, displayed by withdrawal from the Six-Power Group of bankers in 1913, was not sufficient for the protection of China, steps were then taken to form a new consortium which should have prevented continued development of sphere-of-interest diplomacy in China.<sup>247</sup>

On November 2, 1917, the Lansing-Ishii Agreement was signed. It stated that neither country would infringe on the independence or territorial integrity of China, that both would adhere to the Open Door and to equal opportunity for commerce and industry in China, and that neither would take advantage of China's current condition to obtain special rights or privileges which would abridge those of citizens of other states. Furthermore, the United States recognized that "territorial propinquity creates special relations between countries"; hence Japan had special interests in China, especially in those areas contiguous to Japanese possessions.<sup>248</sup>

This agreement was concluded without consultation with, or even the knowledge of, the United States Minister to China, Dr. Paul S. Reinsch who, to his chagrin, learned of it through the Japanese Minister in Peking. Minister Reinsch alleged that he did his best to soften its effect by sanctioning in the Chinese translation the



use of the term "special relations" rather than "special interests." The Japanese, however, insisted on the stronger translation, and at once, through their official spokesmen and the press, demonstrated that they intended to take full advantage of it.<sup>249</sup>

Viscount Ishii said: "Because Lansing's wife was the daughter of John Foster, ex-Secretary of State and, later advisor to the government of China, he made every effort to defend China, to assist his father-in-law. Thus, we experienced a great deal of inconvenience and difficulty in the negotiations on the problem of China. There existed a wide gulf between us when we unbosomed ourselves. We often had stormy debates which jeopardized the conclusion of the agreement, since from the outset we agreed to have heart talks. However, at the next meeting, after he reported to the President on the progress of the negotiations, we were surprised to find him softened and compromising in his opinion. It seems that President Wilson made a comparative study of the arguments of both sides, and when he thought our argument just, he adopted it unconditionally and urged the Secretary of State to recognize it. We always felt as if we were negotiating with President Wilson instead of Secretary of State Lansing. But for President Wilson, the negotiations would surely have ended in failure. (from the Gaiko Yoroku by Ishii Kakujiro, pp. 148-49)<sup>250</sup>

By means of demands served on China, supplemented by the threat of interference in the internal political struggle in China and by actual interference, Japan established hegemony on the continent. Then, through



successive agreements with Russia, England, France, Italy, and the United States, sought largely because of war necessity, it safeguarded its supremacy against attacks from the outside world.<sup>251</sup>





## E. The Siberian Expedition

The rapid successes of the Russian Revolution and the crumbling of the eastern front in Europe led to British speculation as to the advisability of asking Japan to intervene in Siberia.

In the fall of 1917, the General Staff of the Japanese Imperial Army had already made a careful estimate of the problems involved. It concluded that logistic difficulties made it unwise to undertake a major effort on the eastern front. Consequently, Japan agreed with the United States that force should not be used to intervene in Russia against the Bolsheviks. The Imperial Army urged, just as Nishihara had recommended, that efforts be concentrated on securing political and economic supremacy in China through the exploitation of natural resources.<sup>252</sup>

Soon after the Communists took control in Russia, the problem arose of what to do with 50,000 Czech troops who had deserted the Austrian army and had joined the Russian forces. When the Russian army disintegrated, the Czech government with headquarters in Paris, had started to move eastward across Siberia. It was the intention



to evacuate them from Siberia and to bring them to Europe to be incorporated into the French army; Moscow agreed. As they made their way across Siberia through the prevailing unrest, they were forced to periodically fight their way through one band or another. They found themselves most often being attacked by Bolshevik detachments. This led to a demand that they be rescued from the Communists.<sup>253</sup>

There were hundreds of thousands of Austrian and German prisoners in Russian prison camps, both in European Russia and in Siberia. It was rumored among the Allies that they had been let out of the prison camps, (true); and that they were being armed by the Bolsheviks, (false). This was offered as another reason for intervening in Siberia, though whether it was really believed by the British and French has always been subject to doubt. A third reason for intervention was that in Vladivostok there existed a quantity of arms and military supplies that had been sent by the Allies when it was still thought the Russians would and could resist Germany. It was urged that these supplies be kept from falling into the hands of the Bolsheviks and later, perhaps, the Germans.<sup>254</sup>



The early Japanese attitude toward intervention was expressed officially by Baron Goto, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, on May 1, 1918, when he said that "Japan must give encouragement, assistance and support to the work of reorganization" in Russia, and that it must continue to assume the burden of "preserving the peace in the Far East." His government, with the concurrence of Great Britain and France, then proposed to the United States that Japanese troops should be sent to Vladivostok to protect the interests of the Allied states.<sup>255</sup>

It was one thing for the Army to decline to participate in a campaign in European Russia and quite another for it to refrain from taking advantage of the Bolshevik Revolution to improve Japan's position in Eastern Siberia or in Northern Manchuria. Furthermore, nearly three-quarters of a million tons of Allied war material had accumulated at Vladivostok and would be a valuable prize. In the hands of an army unfriendly to China or to Japan, these supplies might be a decisive factor in the future peace of east Asia.<sup>256</sup>

Britain, America, and France sent contingents of 7,000 men each, but the Japanese being nearer at hand,



and having their own objective of guarding against the establishment of a Bolshevik regime in such proximity to Manchuria and Korea, sent no less than 70,000. It was largely due to anxiety concerning Bolshevik intentions that only a few months previously Japan had entered into a military agreement with the Chinese War Office and had undertaken to assist China in the event of a threat to her frontiers from Soviet Russia. When, therefore, the intervention took place, the Japanese invoked this agreement for the purpose of taking control of the Chinese Eastern Railway and using it to transport troops to the Baikal area and beyond.<sup>257</sup>

After Japan had rejected outright a British suggestion that the United States be asked to protect nearly three-quarter of a million tons of Allied war material, the British Cabinet decided to send a cruiser from Hong Kong to Vladivostok to protect the Allied munitions. When Japan learned of this move, it immediately dispatched two warships to Vladivostok for the avowed purpose of maintaining peace and order and protecting the foreign consular corps. One of the ships arrived on January 12, 1918, to be joined two days later by the British cruiser from Hong Kong. In April, after the





theft of Japanese property and the shooting of three Japanese, their marines were landed.<sup>258</sup>

In Japan, Saionji and Hara were willing to send troops only if the United States did so as well. Yamagata and Terauchi favored intervention to get control of the Trans-Siberian Railway and to thereby strengthen Japan's position in Manchuria.

General Tanaka and other army officers had even more grandiose dreams of a Siberian empire, as far west as Lake Baikal, under Japanese influence. These opposing factions were balanced for a time. Then American troops were sent and the Allies invited Japan to participate. In Japan the decision went to those who favored intervention.<sup>259</sup> The expedition became a military rather than a civil matter. The General Staff took advantage of its "autonomy of command" and sent in many times the number of troops originally agreed upon.

When the war ended, other nations withdrew their troops. The United States hinted that Japan should do the same, and Prime Minister Hara succeeded in getting Yamagata's support for a withdrawal of the Japanese forces. The army, however, was no longer in the hands of officers who felt loyalty to Yamagata. Moreover,



it held that its honor was involved, and therefore refused. In Japan the campaign became grossly unpopular. It cost two thirds as much as the Russo-Japanese War, and in the end nothing was gained. One music hall comedian amused his audience by punning that the Siberia shuppei (sending of troops) had become the Siberia shippai (failure); and a general going to take his command wore civilian clothes so as to travel unnoticed. This was the first clear case in modern Japanese foreign policy of autonomous action by the military as a refractory elite.<sup>260</sup>

The Siberian Expedition is a fascinating case study of how the General Staff achieved its objectives in the face of strong national and international opposition. It is equally important as an illustration of power politics at work. Although there were small contingents of Allied forces in Vladivostok and although the Tran-Siberian Railway was jointly operated, control of the hinterland was in Japanese hands. This situation continued throughout the months of discussion on the peace settlement in Paris. When the issues of racial equality, of Japanese rights in Shantung, and of the Twenty-One Demands were all under discussion, the Japanese Army was well entren-



ched from Vladivostok to Harbin to China to Baikal.<sup>261</sup>

The constant realization that the Japanese might remain permanently in that huge area of Siberia acted as a strong incentive to persuade the Allies to accept Japan's demands in Paris. As is so often true in international negotiations, the choice before the Allies was not between a good or bad solution, but rather among the least objectionable of several unpleasant alternatives.



## F. Expectations from the Paris Peace Conference

On November 11, 1918, when the Armistice was signed Japan viewed the cessation of hostilities with a far more detached attitude than any of the other belligerents. Internationally, Japan was in a strong position to press for acceptance of its demands at the Peace Conference. The Japanese army was rapidly spreading westward through Siberia to Lake Baikal and northward into the Amur Valley; the international character of the Siberian Expedition had little effect on retarding this advance.<sup>262</sup> No international agreement had yet been reached for the control of international investments in China, so Japan still operated there with a free hand.

In Tokyo, it was taken for granted that the Paris Peace Conference would legalize the promises of the Allies set forth in the Secret Treaties. They had promised that the German possessions in Shantung and the Pacific Islands north of the equator would be ceded to Japan.<sup>263</sup> Japan also assumed that it would be free to negotiate bilaterally with China on all outstanding issues and that the latter would play only a minor part in the peace negotiations. They accepted the concepts of the League





of Nations and anticipated that the negotiations concerning it would provide an excellent opportunity for the Asiatic countries to seek recognition of both the principle and practice of racial equality.

On January 15, 1919, three days after the Paris Peace Conference was formally opened, Tokyo's leading daily newspaper, the Asahi, editorialized that racial inequality was the real obstacle in the way of the brotherhood of nations and that Japan should represent the colored races of the world in seeking equality.<sup>264</sup>

The Japanese delegates had been instructed to make efforts to secure adequate assurances against disadvantages coming from racial prejudice when the League progressed to the point of nations making concrete proposals for the League Covenant.<sup>265</sup> Japan had racial equality, but on this point it suffered a defeat. It had asked, as part of the new order of relations between states then being promulgated, a declaration of equality between the races regardless of color. This did not arise out of any concern for abstract idealism. It had a concrete motive, and it was opposed even more vigorously than the Shantung provision.



For more than ten years the question of Japanese immigration into the United States had been a sore point between the two countries, at times taking on a threatening aspect. Alarmed at the swarming of Japanese peasants into the states on the Pacific seaboard, those states began to clamor for exclusion of Japanese, as earlier they had called, successfully, for Chinese exclusion.<sup>266</sup>

The Japanese maintained that they wanted only a declaration of principle to vindicate their honor, and disclaimed any intention of asking concrete application of the principle. But the Americans, and even more the Australians, feared that the Japanese would later use the principle as the basis for equal rights of immigration anywhere, a claim it would be difficult to deny without inconsistency. This issue too, was disputed with acrimony, but the Americans were firm and the Australians intransigent, in conformity with the rigid "White Australia" policy.<sup>267</sup>

It would have been better for both East and West if the United States had been more uncompromising on Shantung and more conciliatory on racial equality. The Japanese were to make skillful use of the refusal of



other lands to admit their immigrants to justify their expansion on the Asian continent. By the criterion of supranational and abstract morality, if there is such a thing, America was in the wrong, certainly at fault in its manners; but so far as Japan's international policy and action were concerned, the immigration question was only an instrument of propaganda to be wielded among its own people. It was so wielded, and wielded successfully. It helped convince a large part of the Japanese people that expansion by force was justified.<sup>268</sup>

The peace conference was an interlude for the Far East; a postponement of thorny issues, if not an evasion. The content and spirit of the settlement for that part of the world rankled on all sides, and between Japan and the United States relations became increasingly strained, at times so much so that war was not out of the question.<sup>269</sup>



VIII. The Washington Conference and its Aftermath  
1919-1931

While Japan's conduct at Versailles may be properly described as "successful," at the Washington Conference, held November, 1922, to February, 1932, it was unable to maintain its new position.

The treaties negotiated at the Washington Conference recognized and guaranteed Japanese naval hegemony in the western Pacific, as well as Japan's extensive rights and privileges on the mainland. For this reason, it was possible for the first time to base Japan's diplomatic and military policies on the principle of cooperation with the Anglo-American nations. There emerged in Japan a concept of "national defense" that placed a premium on armament control and adherence to the treaties produced at the Washington Conference. Throughout the 1920s, armament control and the preservation of existing rights via diplomacy characterized the Japanese government. In China, the nationalist movement of the Kuomintang raised difficult questions. Should Japan assist this movement and seek to protect its long-term continental interests by friendly relations with a new central govern-





ment; or should Japan safeguard its privileges by a reliance on military power? In 1927 the Tanaka cabinet formulated a basic policy guide which designated Manchuria as a "special region" in which the government must be ready to resist any encroachments on Japan's position. Following this resolution, especially within the army, there was an increasing desire for positive action that would isolate Manchuria from the rest of China. This approach was, however, shelved under the Hamaguchi cabinet decision denying the premise that Manchuria could be divorced from Japan's policies vis-a-vis China and the powers.<sup>270</sup>

Japan explained its reasons for excluding south Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia as follows: (1) Japan not only had close relations with south Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia politically and economically, but the enterprises established in the said regions affected the vital question of Japan's national defense; (2) since any infiltration of Russian influence detrimental to Japan would be by way of Manchuria and Mongolia, the latter's interests in the said regions were a matter of life or death; (3) consequently, Japan's vital interests in south Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia were



of an entirely different nature from those of other powers.<sup>271</sup>

Both Great Britain and the United States expressed their disapproval of Japan's "formula" concerning the reservation of Manchuria and Mongolia, claiming that Japan's intent was to acquire economic monopoly at the expense of the interests of other powers, or was an attempt to establish a territorial division as a sphere of influence based on political exclusivism. After patient point-by-point negotiations, an understanding was finally reached with regard to the following points: (1) the South Manchuria Railway and its existing branches, together with their subsidiary mines, did not come within the scope of the Consortium; (2) the projected Taonan-Jehol Railway and the projected railway connecting a point on the Taonan-Jehol Railway with a seaport were to be included within the terms of the Consortium Agreement; (3) the Kirin-Hoeryong, the Cheng-Chiatun-Taonan, the Changchun-Taonan, the Kaiyuan-Kirin, the Kirin-Changchun, the Shinminfu-Mukden and the Ssupignkai-Chengchiatun Railways were outside the scope of the joint activities of the Consortium.<sup>272</sup>



Thus, while unsuccessful in inserting into the final Consortium Agreement a specific clause that would reserve its special interests in South Manchuria and in Eastern Inner Mongolia, Japan did receive vague assurances from the United States, Great Britain, and France that they would not countenance operations inimical to Japanese interests in Manchuria and Mongolia. These general understandings finally cleared the way for the formal signing of the Consortium Agreement, which took place in Paris on October 15, 1920.<sup>273</sup>

If the proposition for the formation of a new international banking consortium was designed to check Japan's financial and economic advances in the Far East, it can be assumed that the Washington Conference was aimed at preventing Japan's political and military expansion in the area. The Conference itself marked the first step in the reorientation of Japan's foreign policy in the Pacific, especially in the Far East.

From the standpoint of Japan's continental policy, the Washington Conference achieved such significant results as the Nine-Power Treaty, the solutions of the questions of Shantung's restoration, the Twenty-One Demands, and China's full tariff autonomy.<sup>274</sup>



Japan agreed to restore to China the former German leased territory of Kiaochow within six months after the Treaty came into force, and in addition pledged to withdraw the Japanese guards at Tsingtao within thirty days and the Japanese troops along the Kiaochow-Tsinan Railway within six months.<sup>275</sup>

China, on the other hand, took active steps to nullify the so-called Twenty-One Demands, including the restoration of Port Arthur, Dairen, and the South Manchuria Railway in 1923, the year of the termination of the lease by the earlier stipulations of the Treaties of 1915. Ku Wei-chin, the Chinese representative, went further to maintain the invalidity of foreign settlements and to insist on their retrocessions before the time limit, while Dr. C. T. Wang, singling out the Sino-Japanese Treaties and Notes of 1915, urged that the Treaties and Notes be reconsidered and nullified.

The Japanese delegate, Masanao Hanihara, clearly informed the Chinese delegation that Japan had no intention whatever of abandoning "the important rights which Japan acquired and maintained legally, justifiably and at tremendously heavy sacrifices."<sup>276</sup> Nevertheless, recognizing the necessity of compromising to some extent,





the Japanese Government delegate Kijuro Shidehara, on February 2, 1922, the day following the publication of the Shantung Treaty, declared that Japan would voluntarily renounce the following interests stipulated in the Sino-Japanese Treaties and Notes of 1915:

1. The loan for railway construction in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia, as well as the right of priority for loan guaranteed by various taxes as security.

2. Priority rights for employment of advisors and instructors in South Manchuria.

3. The reservation made for future negotiations on the draft of Group V.

The Japanese Government took another step on February 6, 1922, by participating in the signing of the Nine-Power Customs Convention. Under the Nine Power Treaty, the contracting powers committed themselves to the somewhat antithetical principles of respecting the "territorial and administrative integrity" of China and of maintaining the "principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations" throughout China.<sup>277</sup>

These treaties marked a successful adjustment of the major problems of the Pacific region. From the Japanese standpoint, they achieved the primary objectives of the imperial government, including those of the Navy General



Staff: Japan's home waters were secured from foreign danger; the ability and right of the navy to protect Japanese nationals on the mainland remained unchallenged; and the vexing prospect of an armament race had been avoided.<sup>278</sup>

After the Washington Conference, the main plank of Japan's continental policy towards China was the execution of the letter and spirit of the Conference agreements and resolutions. Popularly known as the "Shidehara Policy", the four principles as enunciated in the Diet on January 18, 1927, by Foreign Minister Baron Kijuro Shidehara may be summarized as follows:

1. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, and the scrupulous avoidance of all interference in its domestic conflicts.

2. The promotion of solidarity and economic rapprochement between the two nations.

3. A show of sympathy and benevolence for the just efforts made to realize the declared aspirations.

4. The maintainance of an attitude of patience and tolerance toward China's present situation and, at the same time, the protection of Japan's legitimate and essential rights and interests by all reasonable means at the disposal



of the Government.<sup>279</sup>

It is undeniable that tensions between China and Japan eased as a result of Shidehara's declaration and that the feelings of distrust and suspicion by the Western powers towards Japan's foreign policy also began to subside. China's attempts to take advantage of Japan's soft and cooperative policy resulted in frequent and unjust trampling of Japanese interests. This increasingly aggressive attitude by China towards Japan naturally fostered the growth of much discontent in Japan.<sup>280</sup>

When the Hamaguchi Cabinet came to power, Baron Shidehara, who again assumed the position of Foreign Minister, attempted to continue his peaceful and cooperative policy towards China. His tenure was interrupted by the occurrence of the Manchurian Incident on September 18, 1931, said to have been caused by the blasting of the South Manchuria Railway at Liu Tiao Kou by Chinese troops.



## A. Tanaka's Aggressive Foreign Policy

Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi has earned himself a place in history as the epitome of Japanese militarism.<sup>281</sup> When he became Premier, he lost no time in reversing the conciliatory policy of the former cabinet. He retained the portfolio of Foreign Minister for himself. He was convinced that the threatened unification of China under Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang and recent events in Manchuria were a direct challenge to Japan.

When Chiang crossed the Yangtze River in a continuation of his northern expedition in his unification campaign, Tanaka's military and civilian advisers urged positive action by Japan before Chiang and his Kuomintang were victorious. One of Tanaka's most influential advisers was Mori Kaku, Assistant Chief of the Political Affairs bureau of the Foreign Office and a resident in China for many years. During a trip to China early in 1927, he became convinced that Japan should counteract the strong communist influence in China by aggressive action. He was a major influence on Tanaka in carrying out such a policy.<sup>282</sup>

One month after he became Prime Minister, Tanaka





dispatched 2,000 Japanese troops from Manchuria to Tsingtao in Shantung Province to interrupt Chiang Kai-shek's advance. A direct clash between the Chinese and Japanese troops was avoided, and Chiang Kai-shek temporarily withdrew from public life. He went to Tokyo and visited Prime Minister Tanaka with Mori Kaku in attendance. Chiang proposed that China recognize Japan's rights and interests in Manchuria in exchange for Japan's recognition of a united China under his leadership of the anticommunist Kuomintang. Although there is evidence that Tanaka was intrigued with this proposal, he refused to make a deal. Chiang's subsequent success in launching a second northern expedition and threatening Tsinan, the capital of Shantung, made Tanaka decide in April, 1928 to dispatch more troops to China.<sup>283</sup>

Minor clashes occurred between the Chinese and Japanese armies in early May. Faced with superior Japanese forces, Chiang Kai-shek withdrew his troops and headed northward. When the Chinese commander in Shantung refused to surrender, the reinforced Japanese troops bombarded Tsinan killing an estimated 3,600 Chinese. These actions, which were condoned by the cabinet, created



the opposite results from those Tanaka had expected. The bombardment of Tsinan brought world condemnation for the atrocity.

The bombardment of Tsinan increased the effectiveness of the Chinese boycott of Japanese goods. It convinced Chiang Kai-shek that Japan was his enemy, and he continued his march toward Peking. Having failed in their mission to keep Chiang from proceeding to Peking, Tanaka reluctantly ordered the Japanese troops to leave Shantung.

Tanaka's plans for Manchuria became a partial victim of his action in Shantung. He is credited with reversing the Shidehara diplomacy, with setting Japan on a course of continental aggression, and with articulating the rationale for this with the "Tanaka Memorial" in which he charted Japan's steps toward war.

On its own initiative the Kwantung Army had dispatched troops to the border of China proper and had wanted to establish a puppet governor in Manchuria completely friendly to Japan, presumably not under Chang Tso-lin. In the meantime, Colonel Komoto Daisaku had plotted to assassinate Chang Tso-lin, hoping that this would precipitate general disorder throughout Manchuria



and offering an excuse for the Kwantung Army to take it over.<sup>284</sup> On June 4, 1928, as Chang was returning to Mukden from Peking, and at the spot where his train crossed the tracks of the South Manchurian Railway, his special coach was bombed.<sup>285</sup> Since one of the chief responsibilities of the Kwantung Army was the protection of the South Manchurian Railway zone and even though Tanaka and Japanese military leaders publicly disclaimed any responsibility for the incident, the implication was clear. Chang must have been murdered on orders from someone within the Kwantung headquarters.

Tanaka's attempts to live up to his campaign propaganda thus "introduced new elements in Sino-Japanese relations not in the field of policy but in policy execution". The army units succeeded in diverting Tanaka's diplomacy, and once they were involved, a predictable escalation of language and prestige brought the army commanders the backing of their fellows in the General Staff and War Ministry. Next, Manchuria was drawn into the maelstrom of party and power politics in both Nanking and Tokyo. This time the agents of change were in the Japanese military establishment in Manchuria.<sup>286</sup>



## B. The Tanaka Memorial

Crowded onto a small group of islands, Japan's traditional ambition has been territorial expansion, and Korea and China were aware of it. For the peace of the Far East they had their own traditional policy, which was to keep the islanders on their own islands. Japan's repeated invasions of Korea as first steps toward the conquest of the mainland of Asia met with failure.

The last and most destructive war of Hideyoshi, "the Napoleon of Japan," had occurred in 1592. Although completely defeated by the Sino-Korean allied armies, the war left Korea so helplessly devastated that it never completely recovered. From then until 1876 the isolation of Korea was so air-tight that not a Japanese or Chinese was allowed to enter the country without special permit. The Samurai warriors, though defeated and repulsed by the allied troops of Korea and China after the Hideyoshi invasion, never ceased to cherish their dream of 'world conquest.' Their idea of the world never extended beyond the continent of Asia, "within the Four Seas."

The great victories they won were bound to have an effect on the minds of the Japanese. They began to believe





that they were invincible. The nation was convinced that so long as it was trained and equipped it could carry its conquests into the West as well as in the East. Out of this national dream came into existence what was later known as the Tanaka Memorial. The idea of world conquest, as incorporated in that document, was by no means new.

It was the nation's hereditary ambition put into new language, and with its scope widened. Baron Tanaka's secret memorial was to Japan what Hitler's Mein Kampf was to Germany. Both were written not as prophecies, predicting what would come to pass, but as military blueprints for remapping the world.

Baron Tanaka knew that Japan had to move with stealth until it was strong enough to come out in the open. For that reason he kept the memorial secret. One copy of the document was smuggled out of Japan and made public. The American people were not prepared to accept it as the revelation of Japan's military aims. Most Americans disregarded it, just as most Europeans disregarded Hitler's book.

Certain statements in the memorial are very significant:



"For settling the difficulties in Eastern Asia, Japan must adopt a policy of iron and blood.... In order to conquer the world, Japan must conquer Europe and Asia; in order to conquer Europe and Asia, Japan must conquer China.... In the future, if we wish to control China, the primary move is to crush the United States.... If we succeed in conquering China, the rest of the Asiatic countries and the South Sea countries will fear us and surrender to us...."<sup>287</sup>

In the light of the Sino-Japanese conflict, it was all too evident that the complete subjugation of China was an integral part of Japan's design.

There is very little hard evidence to substantiate these as Japan's aims, and not a scrap of evidence to authenticate the so-called "Memorial," which became a convenient item of anti-Japanese propaganda before and during World War II. The document even became a subject of anti-Tanaka and anti-Seiyukai propaganda within Japan itself. Tanaka's reputation can best be understood as the joint product of Japan's partial political democratization and the military response to Chinese nationalism.<sup>288</sup>



## IX. Conclusion

The evidence shows that Japan was engaged in a long-term program to establish hegemony over Asia. To this end it had reordered its entire national life from cradle to grave.

Japan cultivated a spirit of militarism among its people, and it indoctrinated them with the beliefs that they were especially endowed by the Creator and that unremitting allegiance to the Emperor, who was of divine descent, was rewarded with a seat among the gods. It was then impossible, from their point of view, for the Japanese to brook interference with their haven-directed program.<sup>289</sup>

Japan had begun to build an Asiatic empire at the expense of China before World War I. China recognized the impossibility of preventing its island neighbor from extending control over the Ryukyu archipelago, south of Kyushu, in 1881. From the Ryukyu islands the Japanese were more fully able to appreciate the strategic value of Formosa at the southern extremity of the chain. The shaky control of the Manchu-Chinese government was eliminated completely after China's defeat in 1894-95. Through



the Treaty of Shimoneseki, Formosa and the Pescadores Islands, located between China and southern Formosa, were surrendered to Japan. Japan's gradual expansion into the islands of the south brought its forces within a short distance of the Chinese port of Amoy and the province of Fukien.

During the peace negotiations of 1895 Yamagata wrote to a friend that the situation in the Far East would grow worse and that Japan "must be prepared for another war in ten years." The war with Russia came as predicted, and from it Japan gained the southern half of the island of Sakhalin, the recognition of Japan's paramount interests in Korea, the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula, and railway rights in southern Manchuria.<sup>290</sup>

The second cornerstone of Japan's imperial structure was laid when Korea was annexed in 1910. After protesting for centuries that Korea was aimed by nature and human malevolence as a dagger pointed at the heart of their country, the Japanese were able in the twentieth century to turn the dagger in the opposite direction. In the period 1910-31, Korea was prepared as a base for further continental expansion. Korean customs, institutions, and economic life were altered to fit Japanese blueprints for empire-building.<sup>291</sup>





Another aspect of this early phase of imperialism was Japan's desire to get great-power credentials. The great powers of the world had either empires or vast internal territories under their control. Japan's early concern for security quickly blossomed into a desire for an empire as well. Yet, aware of its weaknesses, Japan moved slowly from one limited objective to the next.

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 marked Japan's recognition as a great Far Eastern power. Its victory, however shaky, in the Russo-Japanese War confirmed this fact, and by the time of Versailles, Japan was a world power. Its empire had become less a needed symbol of political prestige, and more an accepted part of the Japanese body politic, integrated economically with the homeland.

The economic dimension of this early phase of imperialism is hard to pin down. During the 1870's and 1880's economic factors were minimal. By the turn of the century they were more important, though difficult to evaluate. Marxist historians in Japan have had trouble explaining why early Japanese capitalism, still blighted with feudal vestiges, should have manifested the expansionist tendencies that "ought" only to appear



in the most advanced capitalist nations. One explanation suggested is that in Japan the shortage of capital, rather than its surplus, led to imperialism and that the Japanese, unable to compete with the West under conditions of free competition, attempted to establish protected zones on the continent to which Japanese exports might be sent. Japanese businessmen did not want expansion before 1905, they were not interested in Manchuria, and they saw empire itself as unprofitable. Japan did need raw materials. During World War I the zaibatsu encouraged the government in its demands for iron, coal, and other raw materials from Manchuria and China. Yet, at this time, raw materials were available on the open market. Japan's economic development also benefited from Japan's relatively large military expenditures.<sup>292</sup>

In the area of ideology, a considerable number of elements joined in support of imperialism. One encompassing element was the sanction of Japan's "political religion." Before the formation of the constitutional orthodoxy, very diverse positions were taken regarding the emperor, and even after the turn of the century, the range of thought concerning the emperor



was rather broad.<sup>293</sup> The title "emperor" for their ruler is a misnomer. The Japanese do not call him "Emperor", but "Tenno", the Heavenly King. They do not class him with the emperors and kings of nations; He is above them all, a superior being. Even great Christian leaders educated in the West, such as the late Inazo Nitobe (1862-1933), declare the ruler of Japan is "the bodily representative of Heaven and Earth." Every Japanese was taught to believe he was more or less a god, because he belongs to the divine Yamato race. Every child grew up with the belief that: (1) Japan's Emperor was the only divine ruler; (2) Japan was the only divine land; (3) Japan's people were the only divine people and, therefore, Japan must be the light of the world.<sup>294</sup> Yet, since the emperor rather than the law or an abstract ethic was the ultimate ground both of morality and of political legitimacy, the imperial mission of the emperor's army could hardly be found morally wrong. Expansion did not need to be justified as long as it was successful.

A second element coloring Japanese perceptions of international relations was the lack of a tradition of international law. Japan was not traditionally part of



a multi-state international community like that of the European nations. Japan lacked the idea of a universal law to which all nations might agree. Even their great leaders educated in the West, such as the late Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834-1901), felt that while law was useful in dealing with the European nations, it was of little value in Japan's relations with the rest of the world. And even in relation to the West, in spite of his general commitment to law, Fukuzawa early observed:

One hundred volumes of International Law are not the equal of a few cannon; a handful of Treaties of Friendship are not worth a basket of gunpowder. Cannon and gunpowder are not aids for the enforcement of given moral principles; they are the implements for the creation of morality where none exists. <sup>295</sup>

This view was reinforced toward the end of the nineteenth century by the impact of Social Darwinism. Spencer's ideas on individualism aroused little interest, but the ideas that the fittest societies not only survived but conquered was readily accepted and joined to ideas regarding Japan's moral superiority.

A third ideological factor at this early stage was the support given to Japan's expansionism by the proponents of constitutional government. For one thing, some





in the political parties spoke of "Japan's Monroe Doctrine."<sup>296</sup>

On the face of it, the Japanese "Monroe Doctrine" was designed to protect China against the imperialism of the Western nations. For another, party politicians had argued from the start that constitutional government was strong government. Constitutional government and colonial expansion were not seen as incompatible: England had both.<sup>297</sup> Fukuzawa supported the Sino-Japanese War as a means of advancing "modern civilization" on the continent, and Okuma violently criticized the government for not getting more out of the Russo-Japanese War.

Ties between party politicians and the Japanese patriotic societies also grew out of this mixture. The early doctrines of ultranationalist societies joined liberalism and expansionsim; their members, therefore, could go from the party movement to continental adventures with little sense of contradiction.<sup>298</sup>

Some Japanese were aware that the era of imperialism was passing. Yet most felt that, since Japan had begun late, the powers, her allies, should not begrudge



her a few more years of activity.

The last fling of this early phase of imperialism stemming from decisions by a unified government, as well as being the first presage of something new, was the Siberian Expedition of 1918-22. Desirous of getting Russia back into the war against Germany, the Allied powers sent troops to Siberia. Yamagata and Terauchi favored intervention to get control of the Trans-Siberian Railway and to thereby strengthen Japan's position in Manchuria. General Tanaka and other army officers had even more grandiose dreams of a Siberian empire as far as Lake Baikal, under Japanese influence. In Japan the campaign became grossly unpopular. It cost two-thirds as much as the Russo-Japanese War, and in the end nothing was gained.

The theory of the imperial will was thus a fatal flaw in Japan's political structure, but the militarists could not have exploited it so successfully had not the armed forces enjoyed in practice considerable independence from public control and autonomy within the government. This was a serious constitutional flaw. Diet control over the cabinet was never fully established even in the



1920's, because the Diet never won full control over the purse strings. If the budget were rejected by the Diet, the cabinet had the right to continue in force the budget of the preceding year.<sup>299</sup>

The navy and army, moreover, maintained independence from the cabinet by insisting that the Navy and Army Ministers be active officers of high rank and therefore subject to military discipline and available for service in the cabinet only with army and navy approval. This ruling, first made in 1895 and given imperial sanction five years later, permitted the armed forces to destroy cabinets or prevent undesirable leaders from taking the premiership simply by refusing to let any qualified officers accept portfolios in the government.

The armed forces had thus not only established their independence of the civil government but had won a virtual veto power over the cabinet. The way was open for any action the army wished to take.

The authoritarian state created the ideal conditions for the mass acceptance of the ideals of militarism and aggression that were held up before the Japanese people by the leaders of modern Japan. The people accepted the



decisions for war and aggression that were made by the narrow ruling oligarchy, and they accepted without complaint the sacrifices that grew out of these decisions. They accepted them not only because they had been forced to do so and indoctrinated to do so, but also because they were acting as their political traditions and their political attitudes had disposed them.





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